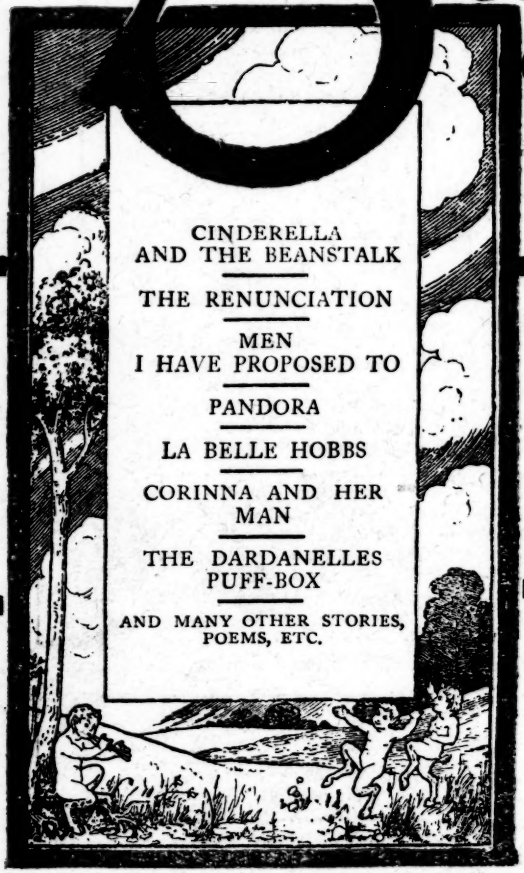
L996.c.40.61

THE SMART SET

A Magazine of Cleverness

To Amuse. Not to Instruct

Vol 61 to 62



CINDERELLA AND THE BEANSTALK

THE RENUNCIATION

MEN I HAVE PROPOSED TO

PANDORA

LA BELLE HOBBS

CORINNA AND HER MAN

THE DARDANELLES PUFF-BOX

AND MANY OTHER STORIES, POEMS, ETC.

MAY 1920

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY APR 29 CANADA

1/3 NET

S.378

'PHONE: 3520 KENSINGTON

BARKERS

CATALOGUES ON APPLICATION

The Great Kensington Shop for Ladies' Fashions

Remarkable Values in the Elegant Tailor-made Suit.
Barker Blouses are famous for Value: known all over the World.

KENSINGTON HIGH STREET, W. 8.

THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF CLEVERNESS

The entire contents of this magazine are protected by copyright in all countries and must not be reprinted

Editor—J. W. MILNE

MAY, 1920

THE FLIRT	Louise Bryant	1
THE HERMIT	Jameson Andrews	2
I MADE YOU A SONG	Glenn Ward Dresbach	2
CINDERELLA AND THE BEANSTALK	Lilith Benda	3
THE DISTRESSING PREDICAMENT OF AN HONOURABLE LITTLE BOY	Ian MacKinnon	22
THE TRADITION OF THE HOUSE OF MONSIEUR	Maurice Davis	23
THE RENUNCIATION	L. M. Hussey	29
PATRON SAINTS	Hortense Flexner	38
MEN I HAVE PROPOSED TO	June Gibson	39
CONFESSION	David Morton	42
CORINNA AND HER MAN	Thyra Samter Winslow	43
LEAVES	Luis Muñoz Marin	51
THE LEGEND OF MARGARET	Helen Woljeska	52
LA BELLE HOBBS	John Chapin Mosher	53
THE HUMAN BRAIN	Eugene Lyons	66
MI-CARÊME	Charles Divine	66
THE DARDANELLES PUFF-BOX	J. R. Milne	67
DILEMMA	J. K. Nicholson	74
THE TREAD OF PAN	Harold Crawford Stearns	74
PANDORA	Edith Chapman	75
SURVIVAL	Muna Lee	82
AS WATER SPILLED ON THE GROUND	Virginia Terhune Van de Water	83
FRIENDSHIP	T. F. Mitchell	93
ON THE SIXTH DAY	Tom Ransford	94
ESSAY IN THE SOCRATIC MANNER	James Drake	94
POMMIERS NORMANDS	Yvonne Durand	95
ABOUT FASHIONS AND OTHER THINGS	Various Hands	98

Annual Subscription, 15/- post free. Foreign Subscription, 16/- post free.

Published by THE ROLLS HOUSE PUBLISHING CO., LTD., Breams Buildings, E.C., for the Proprietor, J. W. Da Costa.

"The Smart Set" Magazine, Dane's Inn House, 265 Strand, W.C. 2
to which all editorial and advertising matter should be addressed.

THE INDIAN RESTAURANTS, LTD.

9, LEICESTER PLACE, LEICESTER SQUARE, W.C. 2

Tel.: GERRARD 3272

CURRIES TO SUIT THE MOST FASTIDIOUS PALATES.

EVERYTHING *PUCCA* INDIAN.

30—and not out

Gentlemen, *24th Oct., 1919.*

I notice in your current advertisement in the daily papers you state "many people have had Waterman Fountain Pens in use over 20 years." It may interest you to know that I am one amongst these. I have had my Waterman in constant use for 30 years come the 31st of this month and have never experienced any difficulty with it.

(*Signed*) P. E. BRIANCE.

Isn't that the kind of Pen YOU need?

Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen

No. 12 "Regular" at 12s. 6d. No. 42 "Safety" at 17s. 6d. No. 52 "Self-filling" at 17s. 6d. Also see No. 54 "Self-filling" with extra large nib at 22s. 6d. Large variety of sizes and styles.

Also Presentation Pens in Silver and Gold. Nibs to suit all hands (exchanged gratis if not quite right). Of Stationers and Jewellers everywhere. Write for Illustrated List to—

L. G. Sloan, Ltd., The Pen Corner,
Kingsway, London, W.C. 2

DUCO GAITERS (PAT)

For All Motor Cars.

PROTECT all types of leaf springs from dirt and wet, and allow a constant supply of lubricant to work between the leaves, keeping the springs permanently supple and ready to absorb road shocks. Have Duco Spring Gaiters fitted to your car, and secure pleasurable riding no matter how rough the road.

Duco Booklet and Measurement Form Post Free.

Brown Brothers, Ltd.
Great Eastern St., London, E.C. 2.
Showrooms: 15, Newman Street, W. 1.

YOU MAY BE FORTY, BUT YOU CAN LOOK TWENTY.

HOW WRINKLES AND LINES CAN BE COMPLETELY BANISHED IN TWO NIGHTS.

The secret of a youthful appearance is a soft, smooth skin free from lines and wrinkles, and the woman of forty-five who has managed to preserve her complexion can easily pass for thirty, while often a woman of thirty, who has allowed lines and wrinkles to form on her face, will look fifteen or twenty years older than she is.

WHY LOOK OLDER THAN YOU FEEL WHEN YOU CAN REMOVE THE WRINKLES OF TWENTY YEARS IN TWO NIGHTS?

The Japanese have always known the secret of perpetual youth—a clear, smooth skin free from lines, but it was not until Mde. Miyako introduced the method into Europe that the women of the Western World learnt how they, too, might banish the finger marks of Time as one wipes figures from a slate, once and for ever, in a few short hours.

THOUSANDS HAVE SUCCEEDED, WHY NOT YOU?

Since the method has been introduced into the United Kingdom thousands of women of ages varying from forty to seventy have removed all traces of lines from their faces by this simple method, and you can do the same.

DO YOU LOOK OLDER THAN YOU FEEL?

If you are looking older than you feel or than you ought to look, do not hesitate to write to-day to Mde. Y. Miyako, and she will send you full particulars of her wonderful method by return of post. SEND NO MONEY, but if convenient enclose three penny stamps to defray cost of postage, etc. Address:—Mde. Y. Miyako (Dept. 127c), 47 Cranbourn Street, London, W.C. 2.

YOUR DESTINY

A SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION INTO THE FORCES CONTROLLING YOUR DESTINY

INTERESTING REVELATIONS

Send DATE, TIME, and PLACE of Birth

Readings at 5/-, 10/6, £1/1/0, and £2/2/0
Birthday Reading, 2/6. Questions of an **IMPORTANT** nature, 10/6 each query.

All Orders receive my Personal Attention.

S. ROBERT RAYE, 97, Brondesbury Villas, Kilburn, London, N.W. 6

NEW AUTHORS WANTED

DO YOU KNOW you can get Expert Editorial Advice **FREE?** Send specimen Short Story or Article (with stamp for return) to Editor-in-chief, Practical Correspondence College, Ltd., 5 Thanet House, Strand, W.C. 2.

OUT AND AWAY

A POSY OF TRAVELLERS' JOY : : : :

Much good humour characterizes the Spring Number of this superb Pictorial Magazine, now on sale, 2s. 6d. Its contributors include :

ARTHUR MACHEN	W. HEATH ROBINSON	MAX PEMBERTON
F. J. RANDALL	CHARLES G. HARPER	WALTER JERROLD
A. ST: JOHN ADCOCK	L: E. FILMORE	FRANK FINN, F.Z.S.
C. E. BROCK	WARWICK REYNOLDS	ALFRED LEETE

Of all Booksellers, Bookstalls and Newsagents, or 2s. 9d. post free from the Publishers: G. HEATH ROBINSON AND J. BIRCH, LTD., 17 Tooks Court, London, E.C. 4.

A HOME REMEDY FOR ALL PAIN

TRIAL PACKAGE FREE TO-DAY

Are you in pain? This is the question you will hear daily, and to be able to relieve pain, whether it be a slight nervous headache or the most excruciating sufferings of neuralgia or rheumatism, brings the height of pleasure to both patient and doctor.

Touching this point, Dr. H. Engle (M.D.) says Antikamnia Tablets have become favourites with members of the medical profession; they are very reliable in all kinds of pain, and act at once. A boon to ladies.

Antikamnia Tablets never fail to give relief in all pains due to rheumatism, headache, sciatica, neuralgia, toothache, gout, and are especially useful for all conditions known as women's aches and pains.

Antikamnia Tablets are quite safe, and leave no unpleasant after effects, and in 92 per cent. of all cases they stop the pain immediately.

TRIAL PACKAGES FREE

10,000 packages of Antikamnia Tablets have been set aside for free distribution. If you will send your name and address (a postcard will do) to the Antikamnia Tablet (Dept. A92), 46, Holborn Viaduct, London, E.C., you will receive one of these presentation packages with interesting booklet, absolutely free of charge.

IT is famous for its shrewd and humorous analysis of current events, and its caustic comments are valued by men of affairs.

Its list of subscribers is practically the Army and Navy List.

To casual purchasers its price is **2d.** at any bookstall or newsagent.

"TOWN TOPICS"

(THE JOY RAG)

Byron House, Fleet St.,

LONDON, E.C. 4

POPE & BRADLEY
Civil Military & Naval Tailors
of OLD BOND ST LONDON W.

DANCING THROUGH LIFE

By H. DENNIS BRADLEY.

THE KNIGHT CLUB

To meet the many requests, reproductions of some of this series of pictures, including "The Original Jazz," "The Interrupted Jazz," "The Beautiful Rag," and "Victory," are now published in Colour, 17in. by 12in. at 1s. each.

The world wants to dance . . . the natural reaction of five years of misery and suppression.

But to dance . . . in or with anything . . . one desires the right atmosphere. That is not to be found everywhere.

The sensitive few love joy, fever, fire, excitement, and loathe sordidness, dulness, coldness, and incitement.

Few men know this West End of ours better than I do. I know its mask and its life behind the scenes. I love it in places and hate it in others. But the fundamental emotions of love and hate exist in all things.

Dancing is life . . . its purity lies in the sheer exuberance of youth. In the old it is unnatural both physically and mentally . . . and, oh! so repulsive to watch.

Many old men pay me the compliment of hate, but in their weakness it is not nearly so violent as my hatred of their ruination and violation of all the beautiful things of Youth and Life.

A million of the flower of the nation have gone West. So age annexes Youth's territory of joy in the West End.

There are many Clubs and "Palaces" in the West and beyond where cleanness, artistry, and joy survive.

But there is one not quite in the West, but just coquetting on the fringe,
Where the cuisine appeals and the atmosphere appals!
Where one can see rows and rows of O.B.E.'s all obese!
Where cultured crooks rest on their oars!
Where Prodigal Fathers eye the fatted calf!
Where super Suburbia shimmers but shines not!
Where neither dignity nor impudence reigns!
Where Cupid finds no home but where cupidity lies . . . !
Where voluptuous Vulgarity expresses itself!
Where Blatantcy bleats!
Where some of us have danced before, but dance no more!

* * * * * * * * * *

These notes are, of course, publicity for Pope and Bradley, who make decent and not decadent clothes, and whose charges are moral and not infamous. Lounge Suits from £12 12s. 0d. Dinner suits from £16 16s. 0d. Dress Suits from £18 18s. 0d. Riding Breeches from £5 15s. 6d.

14 OLD BOND STREET W
& 11 & 13 SOUTHAMPTON ROW W.C
& ROYAL EXCHANGE MANCHESTER

Royal Worcester Kidfitting Corsets

dispel all doubts about contour: certified by Paris as correct.

These corsets simply radiate style to dresses worn over them because they are designed in collaboration with the great Parisian salons just before the new dress modes are revealed to the World.

BON-TON CORSETS

are the highest grade of the Royal Worcester make, and range in price from **21/-** to **6½** Gns.

Complete Changes of Fashion

make careful selection of your corset this season imperative. See that you get *your individual* model in Royal Worcester or Bon-Ton corsets. Insist on being properly fitted. Don't let an out-of-date or badly-designed corset mar the beauty and fashionable lines of your new dress. Be sure—wear corsets of outstanding and recognized merit. Bon-Ton corsets surpass "made to measure" corsets in comfort and style. Their smart lines are designed by the world's leading corsetier.

Obtainable only at houses of prestige. For name of local agent write to:—

WORCESTER WAREHOUSE COMPANY LIMITED,

76-78, Mortimer St., London, W.1.

857. *An elastic-topped model on entirely new lines for average and full figures. Pink or Blue Broché, six suspenders. Sizes 21 to 30. Price* **29/11**. *Outsizes extra.*

Vol. LXI MAY, 1920 No. 1

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
APR 29
1920
CAMBRIDGE

THE FLIRT

By Louise Bryant

WHEN the office closed he put on his hat, straightened his cravat, took his stick and walked to the station. He did it all leisurely because it was warm and there was no need to hurry. He knew exactly what to expect when he got home. His wife would be waiting for him with as good a dinner as a genius could manage on the meagre allowance he gave her And she would be cool and neatly dressed. He was entirely satisfied with his wife. He was even faithful to her.

But there was one thing that worried him. He thought about it constantly. He was getting old.

He was just past forty and perhaps was losing his charm. He would like to be able to attract women. He did not like to think that he was really an old man. He took good care of himself and he felt that he looked much younger than he actually was.

The train stopped at a station. A young woman got in. She was slim and pretty. He began to stare at her. She felt his gaze and glanced up uneasily. A change came into his face. He could feel his heart beating. Would he be able to interest her? If he got up now and sat beside her, would she be offended? He continued to stare. Suddenly she answered him. She smiled. Immediately he grew cold. He looked at her with distinct hauteur. He was satisfied. Now he could go home in peace. . . .

THE HERMIT

By Jameson Andrews

THERE was a man.
He was a Hermit.

* * * * *

He lived on a high mountain in a cave.

He was an old man and very wise.

Many men scaled the mountain to hold converse with the Hermit and reap the benefit of his great wisdom.

One day a woman climbed the mountain.

It does not matter whether the lovely hair of her was showered with pure gold dust or whether her wide hips billowed like the waves of Waikiki . . .

She was a woman . . .

* * * * *

There was a man . . .
She was a woman . . .
There was no longer a Hermit.

I MADE YOU A SONG

By Glenn Ward Dresbach

I MADE you a song of rain along the tree-tops
In an old woodland that the world forgets,
Then found that Spring had wandered to a hillside
And written it in violets.

I made you a song of an old, nameless longing
Where you had walked the moon-mad sands with me,
Then heard, above my heart, for ever singing
The vasty longing of the Sea.

And now I make you but a song of loving,
Of young blood thrilled and lips that touch and cling—
Something the Spring cannot write out in flowers,
Nor waters of the Sea can sing!

But with the violets upon the hillside
This song of love may fade, in season die—
Only is sure the old Sea's vasty longing,
And yet I cannot tell you why!

CINDERELLA AND THE BEANSTALK

By Lilith Benda

CHAPTER I

WHEN Langham Moore had stirred the logs in the fireplace to a blaze which dissipated the cheerlessness of his new abode, and sent the pungent aroma of burning pine to his nostrils, he looked speculatively about the room, finding himself more in accord with his changed plan of existence. In one corner he noted the upper part of a door looming above a chest of drawers that had been placed against it in unpicturesque fashion. When he had covered the defacement with a Japanese print, it struck him that life, after all, was not half bad. And when he had hung the precious Gauguin on a wall space advantageously lighted, and his own portrait of his uncle Johnnie, dear to him as the firstling of a rapidly increasing brood, over the brick fire-place where the flickers lighted the fine old face into a semblance of movement and life, he became conscious of a fellowship, unfamiliar for many months, stealing over him.

He pushed a couch across the room until it faced the flames, and threw himself indolently among the cushions—a tall, slight, rangy, lazy looking young man, just past the stripling stage, brown of hair and eyes and skin, and with features, upon them the stamp of an inherent naïveté unspoilt by early sophistication, almost uncannily like those in the portrait over the mantel. There was the same delicacy of contour, the same underlying virility, the same straightforward glance, high forehead, the same proud bearing and courtliness of aspect. But the white-haired man of the portrait seemed to exhale a calm detachment from the stress of existence utterly unlike the eagerness for all the world was yet to unfold which sparkled in his nephew's eyes. From the couch cushion the young man bestowed an affectionate look upon the painting.

An instant later, however, he turned away in annoyance. There was a formidable quality to his uncle's stoicism which provokes a fugitive longing for the swish of a woman's silks, which impelled him toward all that was light, transitory, colourful.

Orphaned in childhood, Langham Moore had spent his youth under the tutelage of that relative whom, at three, he had dubbed "Uncle Johnnie," an appellation inappropriate and almost irreverent to the gentleman's awe-inspiring dignity. Moore remembered how his kinsman's mild smile when first hailed as "Uncle Johnnie" had struck him as maddeningly characteristic. John Langham never disapproved of anything save what he termed "the chronic indignation of the world," and then so blandly, with such a serene detachment and unconcern as to make his disapprobation less forcible than the faintest protest. Voices were lowered respectfully at the mention of the Langham millions and the Langham ancestry.

And yet, a bachelor at sixty, their representative, once a renowned *homme de monde* and patron of the fine arts, lived in seclusion on an estate in the Ramapo hills, interested only in his

flower gardens, his Ayrshires and Airedales, his picture galleries, his books, and his nephew. It had seemed to the boy, while from year to year he saw his uncle's face become more dispassionate, his uncle's smile chillier and gentler, that he was watching the attainment of a nirvana, an ultimate calm, immune to "the chronic indignation of the world," but tinged ever so slightly with the chill of the tomb.

Gradually he had discovered himself prey to a growing irritation against his uncle. Long years of close companionship had bound the two in that man-to-man affection than which there is no rarer or more potent tie. Still, approaching manhood, the boy revolted against the resignationism and lethargy in the air. His talent for painting was quickly recognized by his uncle. The older man extended sympathy and fine understanding. There were long art discussions which lasted sometimes from dusk until morning star. And yet the boy became ill at ease.

Moore's leanings toward exotic backgrounds and the purely decorative in art were what endeared Gauguin to him, and what caused him, too, long hours of miserable unrest, inasmuch as he realized that his was no expression of the æsthetic at its highest, that perhaps the longing to create was but a meretricious spur toward futile effort and an insignificant goal, that he was to be no pioneer in vast new fields nor yet the consummation of a period of strivings who bound up precursory gleanings into a rich and enduring oneness. Still this longing to create something, no matter how worthless, persisted even in the face of other divertent propensities. . . . In the first place, women tended sporadically to captivate.

As yet no adept at sentiment, youth and likability alone had turned his novitiate into a series of triumphs over more seasoned Lotharios—and Uncle Johnnie seemed to look a little askance at women. Then, too, a grain of American aggressiveness in his make-up tempted him to a money-making career—and Uncle Johnnie would look faintly astonished when he voiced his discontent with purposeless leisure. And again, there were times when *Wanderlust* obsessed him, when he wanted to throw everything else aside, and succumb to a nostalgia for strange countries, to bask in the South Sea Islands or glimpse the midnight sun. . . .

All this, all these clashing, disquieting decoys he felt that his uncle, secure in a remote nirvana, could not quite understand. Love of romance and adventure urged him to leave the quiet of the Ramapo hills. The charm of the *imprévu* proved stronger than lethargic repose. He had often gone on brief sojourns which took him for several weeks at a time from his uncle's side. But one day abruptly he announced his intention of striking out for himself, packed his belongings, bought a ticket for New York. Without a trace of disapproval in the even, courtly tones, his uncle had bidden him godspeed.

As he lounged now before the fire, a frown of annoyance riddled his high forehead. He was reflecting upon how unsatisfactorily the determination to break from trammel had resolved itself. It was only two months since, arriving almost penniless in New York, he had acquainted himself with the indignities of hall-rooms and hash. During the first few weeks he did no more than dash off two magazine covers for *Mode*, a fashion periodical that had discarded pretty girl effects for bizarre colour blendings and slant-eyed sirens. His contributions met with an enthusiastic reception and substantial cheques. Thereupon, abandoning the hall-room, he hit quite accidentally upon the Cadigan *pension*, an establishment not to be termed a boarding-house any more than was its drawing-room a parlour, or its chatelaine, a massive dame with an instinct for the

rôle of professional hostess, a mere landlady.

Only that morning, in answer to an advertisement for "studio, bath, and board," he had met Mrs. Cadigan. She was a lady built on somewhat more than heroic proportions, tightly laced, of a chemically accentuated blondeness and rosiness, and garbed in the mountainous female's characteristic bright colours, turquoise jewellery, and rhinestone combs. But his first glance told him that though her attire might suggest to an untutored eye the caparisonment of the Paphian sisterhood, all the rhinestones in Christendom could not have erased from her the brand of the "perfect lady." She was like a huge, misshapen over-garnished birthday cake, which, even if displayed in a questionable bakery, would provoke no challenging sniff for poisonous flavourings from a health officer rampant on a pure-food campaign. She emitted a personality attune with her chastely tinted wall-papers and heavily napped Axminsters, with the drawing room's grand piano and Sheraton settee. She augured a cuisine inabusive to the palate. He was prone to overlook her dissertations upon a Miss Briggs and Mr. Meehan who "have been among us fifteen years," upon her niece whose husband was "a travelling gentleman with a travelling gentleman's failings," and who occupied with her four-year-old offspring "the two large, airy rooms and bath on the second floor," upon "the celebrated Miss Channing who is with us now."

When he saw that the studio advertised was a large skylight room well lighted for his work, he engaged it on the spot, had his baggage moved that afternoon, and dined at a restaurant, unwilling at once to risk the dinner-table after Mrs. Cadigan's numerous assertions that her tenants were "all like a cozy little family, you know." . . . Now he lounged, half pleased, half discontented, on the point of a doze. A discreet knocking aroused him.

Followed by her niece, a blonde and massive replica who led by the hand a querulous little boy, Mrs. Cadigan stood in the doorway. She held the copy of *Mode* whose cover he had designed, and he could see by the badly suppressed delight and excitement on her face how it had but recently dawned upon her that her house harboured a nephew of the world-renowned John Langham.

The unwarranted intrusion displeased him. He stiffened at the women's compliments, responded with a curt "some other time" to their entreaties that he "join us all in the drawing-room—Miss Channing is going to play." The two appeared a trifle crushed by his chilly air, and beat a hasty retreat. Again he flung himself upon the couch, meditating upon just what it was that made the "perfect lady" type of female so objectionable. . . .

But only for a moment. From below presently there came sounds at which he started to his feet in dismay. He had become long since maddened by the inundation of quasi-Hawaiian music which infested the cafés and ballrooms where occasionally he spent an idle hour. Now someone was playing a prolonged hula-hula, enough to drive him to distraction. Indignantly he paced the floor until the music ceased, resolving, if it were resumed, that he would leave the next day. Within a few minutes there came a preliminary arpeggio. But the frown disappeared when he recognized the opening bars of a Chopin mazurka. The annoyance on his face changed to keen attention, to rapt interest, finally to open delight.

This, to be sure, was only Chopin in one of the less significant moments. But here was artistry. Here was musicianship. Here was music curiously at odds with his preconceived idea of the Cadigan personnel. His

uncle's training enabled him to appreciate at their intrinsic worth the rare touch, the rich tone, the technical strength and sure control of the pedals, and, particularly, the Slavic temper in the playing.

"Miss Channing is going to play." As he recalled the words his eyes lighted. In a flash the young man who had lounged lazily before the fire became a being alert for adventure. In a flash he fell under the spell of the *imprévu*. A prospect hazily inviting and near at hand drove him to the door. He felt that more than the longed-for swish of silks awaited him in the drawing-room below. In a moment he was hurrying down the heavily carpeted stairs.

CHAPTER II

MIDWAY upon the lower flight he paused when the mazurka came to an end. Through the drawing-room portières he could see only the mountainous aunt and niece, with the latter's four-year-old wriggling upon a maternal knee. Mrs. Cadigan's silky tones sounded above a murmur at the other end of the room. "Play the Hesitation Blues, Miss Channing."

Immediately the person at the piano broke into a syncopated hodge-podge, executed with the requisite ragtime swing, and capped at the finish by an extemporaneous bit of difficult bravura at which the young man on the stairway started in perplexity. He was about to step down into the room when a feminine voice, which rang out startlingly, halted him.

"Now Oswald must sing us 'The Sunshine of Your Smile.'"

It was a strange voice, a deep, beautiful contralto with a vibrant ring like the peal of a great bell. The voice of a foreigner, it seemed to him, about it an indeterminate quality that thwarted any attempt definitely to place it as the voice of youth or maturity. The Cadigan gush rose in response, intermingled with two other voices, male and female, precise and stilled. It was apparent to Moore that the child who squirmed with many an "aw" and "naw" in his proud mother's arms was being urged to a display of talent. Averse to the idea of an infant prodigy's effusions, he remained somewhat reluctantly on the stairway . . . when of a sudden a young woman flashed for an instant upon the scene, caught Oswald from his mother's knee, tossed him high into the air, and bore him away to where, ostensibly, the piano stood.

Moore stepped resolutely down the steps, his quick tread proclaiming zest for a new and promising escapade. For momentary though it had been, this glimpse of a creature swift-moving and lithe, of the flash of white teeth and dark eyes against a richly tinted tawniness, this fleeting, confused impression of an audacity, a repose, a splendid savagery, was enough, so abruptly had it been terminated, to stimulate even in the most impassive of beings a desire for a more prolonged contemplation of the lady's indubitable charms. From the piano there issued an introductory chord. He pushed aside the portières.

"Mr. Moore!"

The unexpected sight of him startled Mrs. Cadigan into her rôle of professional hostess. Flushing a more vivid pink, she almost slipped from her grand manner into the obsequiousness of a plebeian landlady before a star boarder, when she rose to make the introductions. He found himself bowing to a Miss Briggs and a Mr. Meehan, a somewhat faded and nondescript pair who occupied the place of honour on the Sheraton settee. Then—"and Miss Channing," the lady went on. He turned to the figure seated at the piano to meet a pair of extraordinarily large and protuberant and flashing black eyes, about which, for all his certainty that he had never seen them before, there was a something vaguely and puzzlingly familiar. He was on the

point of seating himself near the piano when Mrs. Cadigan, in a misguided attempt to put a newcomer at ease by extolling his accomplishments, indicated the copy of *Mode* on the table, and informed her guests that the cover was the work of their new fellow-lodger. At the chorus of compliments that arose from all except the woman at the piano, Moore reddened slightly, and half resuming his chilly manner, half in lazy unconcern, began to edge doorwise. The vibrant contralto checked his flight.

"A bit *d'après Gauguin-y*,"—he wheeled to see her point to the magazine—"Don't you think?"

There was that in her radiant smile which compelled him to defer his exit. "A bit," he answered easily, "but without the perpendicularities."

"Without the perpendicularities," she returned. "Oh, undeniably!" And as if well aware that it was she who held him in the room, she waved him with a triumphant flourish of proprietorship to the chair beside her. Perfectly at ease now, he leaned toward her. "Miss —er—"

"Channing," she put in. "Edith Channing."

"Miss Channing, haven't I seen you, or your picture or something somewhere?"

"Doubtless," she nodded, "I'm Cinderella, you know." Without further elucidation, she drew the infant Oswald from a corner where he was shifting embarrassedly from one foot to the other. "Now, Mr. Moore, you shall hear our household pride sing 'The Sunshine of Your Smile.'" Lightly she ran her fingers over the keys.

The fidgeting youngster lifted his voice then in lisping, squealing injunction to some unknown to

"Give me your smile,
The love light in your eyes—"

It seemed to Moore that there was an element of *lèse-majesté* in the woman's stooping to the rendition of the song's banal accompaniment. Still he welcomed the child's performance in that it gave him an opportunity the more deliberately to study Miss Channing.

He was struck by a baffling element in her appearance. She irradiated a commingling of fantastically incongruous attributes.

As his eyes swept the erect form that displayed to supreme advantage a russet gown embroidered in amber and burnt orange, with the stamp of the pre-eminent modiste upon its fashionable lines, it occurred to him that her one actual claim to beauty was in the mould of her faultless figure. The waving mass of coal black hair was of too coarse a texture, the face and lips a trifle too full, the nose a trifle too large and retroussé, the teeth and eyes far too big, the cheek-bones too high, the eyebrows, groomed into the sheen of a blackbird's wing, too heavy for symmetry. There was no just balancing of the various features.

And yet these very imperfections served but to accentuate the charm, at once regal and bizarre, of the ensemble effect. The rich crimson tints in the dark skin and vivid scarlet of her full lips, the gleam of the protuberant eyes, the quick flash and instantaneous disappearance of her smiles, all gave her a coruscant allure which intrigued him. Oswald was finishing the chorus after the first verse with a plea for "the right to love you all the while," when this smile flashed, and disappeared. In his chair Moore stirred, taken aback by the surprising change which fell over her face while it was settling into repose.

As if a picture, the work of a representative of a certain school, had been deliberately painted over by an artist of clashing ideals into a representation of another and very different school, and the task had been clumsily performed, so that in spots, where traces of the first painting still asserted themselves, an effect was produced which neither artist had

striven for, so, it seemed to Moore while he watched the woman's smile abruptly disappear, there was something a little set and precise in the fold of her lips, something at odds with all her resplendence suggested, something which explained her presence in the Cadigan fold, which made her rendition of the mazurka tally with the ragtime and the maudlin song, which almost put upon her the "perfect lady" brand that lay over the other women—which, however, antedated her charms only as effectually as if a Renoir nude had been decently draped by a Leighton, who, by bungling his job, unconsciously wrought a not altogether disagreeable transformation. It was in the faint shadows beneath her eyes, in a just perceptible droop of the lids and lips that he thought to see the result of two clashing personalities—the one, temporarily laid aside, of the girl who had played the mazurka, the other that of a woman who abetted a squealing youngster in an unpardonable affront to the tympanum.

"My world for e-e-ever,
The sunshine of your smile!"

The room resounded with applause.

From the piano the woman darted him a quick, curious glance.

Little Oswald responded to his aunt's reminder to "make your bow prettily" with an awkward bob, then trotted from one person to the other depositing a moist salute on every cheek.

Not osculatorily inclined, Moore ventured a handshake. With relief he watched the blonde and billowy ones bear their pride from the room. Only the two on the Sheraton settee remained, deep in whispered confab. He was eager to direct his attentions solely to the woman beside him. The big eyes shone invitingly. With deliberation he rose, and pushed his chair closer to the piano.

"What did you mean by saying you were Cinderella?"

"Just what I said." Apparently surprised at the question, she handed him the fashion magazine. "I'm Cinderella—Hermine's Cinderella . . . surely you know."

Puzzled and curious, he scanned the pages. But his attention was distracted when she turned back to the piano and began to play a bit by Brahms, a little waltz pervaded by the Magyar spirit, and interpreted with true Hungarian abandon, tempered by unerring artistry.

When it was finished, "Are you a Brahmsianer?" she asked.

Then, without turning her head to meet his answer, "You know Conrad, of course," she went on. "Ever strike you how alike they are, Conrad and old Johannes? The same reserve, the same austerity and grandeur, the same intensity and colour and remoteness, the same—how shall I say?—seething dispassionateness, the same flair for the exotic. Seems to me that Conrad penetrates the spirit of his Malays and Congo tribes and things very much as my Johannes does the Magyar. Seems to me that the two may be coupled, just as their vulgar cousins, Liszt and Kipling, may be coupled. Does it strike you so?"

The vibrant contralto fell into silence. On the Sheraton settee the faded pair continued their low-voiced colloquy. Moore leaned forward in his chair the more readily to catch a glimpse of the woman's averted eyes. An untamed effulgence about her aroused a response on his part already more than mere interest. Hers was a tremendous appeal to the senses counterbalanced by a certain tranquillity which reminded him slightly of his uncle Johnnie. He felt at ease, soothed as well as stimulated, already eager to win her and at the same time a bit in the mood for a discussion on books and music like those he had had with the calm old man deserted in the Ramapo hills.

"Those who disparage Wilde as a dilettante," he answered after a pause, "must remember that Wilde,

the critic, prophesied Conrad when he said that the coming men who would stir the world by fiction must either get a new background for their stuff or else—else 'reveal the soul of man in its inner-workings,' I think it was. Do you recall it, Miss—er—" When she turned her face to him, her name struck him as so incompatible with the stamp of foreign extraction on her features that he stumbled over it, and inadvertently voiced a doubt. "Channing isn't really your name, is it?"

There was an instant's hesitation. "Yes, indeed. Mine by right of my having chosen it, assumed it, appropriated it. The name parentally imposed was far too outlandish. Let it suffice that it's not Draga or Sigurd or Mitzi, on the one hand, nor Myrtle or Maisie on the other. It brings memories of a shoddy childhood in a Western mining town. So I'll not tell it."

"Tell me at least," he urged. "You're surely not American, nor Polish, for all that Mazur swing. What then? Hungarian, Ru—"

"Does it matter?" she cut in, hurriedly. "Besides I hardly know—I'm a hybrid without a pedigree. But offsetting that—turn that page," she commanded, pointing to the periodical—"offsetting that, I'm Cinderella, Hermine's Cinderella—a personage!"

"Ah!" As he lowered his eyes from her face to the page, all that seemed puzzlingly familiar about her explained itself. Profusely illustrated by many photographs, he saw an account, entitled "Hermine's Opening," of a prominent modiste's exhibition of midwinter fashions. And looking from picture to picture, he recognized, here in a trotteur frock, there in a negligée or evening wrap, the audacious eyes and beautiful form of Edith Channing.

Indignantly he laid the book aside. It seemed high treason to the woman's elemental splendour of aspect, to the power which gave her such mastery over the piano, thus to have permitted herself to become no more than a model for a Fifth Avenue dressmaker. "*Lèse-majesté*," he thought again. Aware that a comment was expected, without quite knowing what to say, "Why Cinderella?" he asked, "you don't look the part."

The smile gleamed and vanished. "An affectation of Hermine's. She rechristens all her models fantastically. We've a big Valkyrish blonde who is Weia Waga, and a Phryne, an Isis, a Yaha. I was shabby when I applied for work. She tried me out in an awfully outré evening gown. Partly because of the sudden transformation, partly because she thought that I could carry off equally well a demure frock or a dazzling creation, she called me Cinderella. The name caught the popular fancy and I'm almost famous now."

His boyish impetuosity broke through the restraints of politeness. All this was nothing short of sacrilege. "How could you?" he cried; "you with your looks and your talent, you with your taste for music and literature—"

"Literature?" she broke in. "My dear boy, we models at Hermine's are authorities on *Town Topics*, *Broadway Brevities*, and *Jim Jam Jems*."

Still he refused to be mollified. "How could you? What made you—"

"Forty dollars a week, and a good bit extra each month for the photos!" She spoke so sharply that he was silenced. "That's what made me. Try to understand, Mr. Moore—" her voice fell and she turned to him with a hint of sadness in her eyes—"Two years ago I was practising a Bach fugue on a tinny piano in a shabby furnished room—and I hadn't my room rent, nor my piano rent, and I was virtually in tatters—hungry, too. There was a dreadful mirror near the piano. Look at it one way and it gave a good reflection, but look at it the wrong way and you became all warped, and gnarled, and funny. To keep up courage I'd been thinking of a career, thinking of making a

début in flame-coloured chiffon cut very low, and electrifying a vast audience into frantic applause. Well, I happened to look at the mirror the wrong way. What I saw was a gaunt hag making a début in seemly homespun that hid her bones. I did some quick thinking, then. My figure!—oh, my figure!—Oh! my figure! . . . so it went for an hour. And the figure won out. You see, I'd conceived of music as something inextricably mixed with everything that seemed beautiful—with happiness and romance, and lovely frocks, even . . . laugh if you will! And I came down to earth just in time. No melodramatic renunciation, mind you, no burning of the music sheets and such stuff. But I got me my job, became the best paid model in New York—"

"Became Cinderella," he finished for her when she paused.

Without answering, she continued to look at him while slowly her face assumed a new solemnity. He saw a dawning wonderment, a happy surprise, a deep seriousness steal into the dark eyes. He felt that this was the outset of a strange and delightful experience. In puerile fashion he was building air castles. Already this woman was catalogued in his consciousness as the heroine of a forthcoming romance which overshadowed already all the trifling intrigues that had gone before, and were to follow this, a crowning event. It was quite natural that she whom he had known scarce a half-hour should stand to him already in the light of a creature long cherished, that very soon he might expect. . . . "I'm twenty-five"—her murmur tore him from the air castles—"How old are you?"

"Twenty-six," he lied.

"I'm twenty-five," she announced again, a moment later, "and you're the first person I've ever met whom it's possible to talk to." After a continuous glance at the Sheraton settee, "I'm twenty-five," she reiterated, "and I've never been kissed. Does that astound you?"

Such a statement was blasphemous to the curled, scarlet lips. But the faint little droop of her eyelids and mouth gave to her face an austerity which prevented him from telling her so. "There was a foreman," she continued, "at the mines out West, who wanted to marry me. He was greasy and wore celluloid collars. . . Since I came to New York the girls at Hermine's have taken me on a few revels in private dining-rooms, a few bachelor apartment shindies. Some of the men were silly dotards, some likeable boys, but they were one and all good things, live ones, fox trotters, wine openers—and that let them out."

Her elbows on her knees, her chin cushioned in her hands, she appeared to muse, inadvertently almost, as if hardly aware of his presence, to voice memories as she recalled them, and express half-formulated ideas. "I became Cinderella—but by a favour of the gods there was no fairy godmother, no prince, no glass slipper. Cinderella of the glass slipper was a silly miss. . . . 'Cinderella and the Beanstalk' would tell my tale. You know, Mr. Moore, the beanstalk hero should have been a woman. The story teems with woman philosophy. Once a man climbs the ladder that leads to the heights, it's against the very spirit which drove him there to bring his treasures down to earth, no matter how loudly a giant may roar a 'Fee, fi, fo, fum.' He gets kicked off usually without the hen that lays the golden eggs, and the money bags, and the harp—yet nothing could induce him to chop down the beanstalk. It takes female effrontery, female shrewdness, female immunity to mountain peak ecstasy and all that, gracefully to descend. . . . Well, I accomplished the feat. I—"

"Play 'Poet and Peasant,' dear."

Moore was indignant at the abrupt interruption. It came from the wom-

an on the settee, a sour-visaged spinster in purple flannel whom he had noticed but cursorily before, and whose attitude toward the bald-headed nonentity at her side was one of absolute proprietorship. Sullenly he leaned back in his chair, his annoyance increased by the fact that Miss Channing seemed almost to welcome the diversion, met it with a gay, "Poet and Peasant, by all means!" and broke out forthwith into a vile, showy paraphrase, replete with trills and runs and smashing chords.

Presently he saw that she was looking at him in amusement. Through the clamour of a chromatic passage played *fortissimo*, he caught her whisper. "Don't scowl so," it admonished; "you should respect Miss Briggs. She at least remains true to her ideals. Teaches Victorian poetry in a high school. Reflects the fine, academic spirit. Considers the glossaries and chronological tables far greater achievement than the works they supplement, you know. She'll tell you many times while you're here that line 90 of 'The Lotus Eaters' originally had eyelids for eyelid . . ."

The piano passage led to a variation in octaves.

He rose to stand beside her while the whispers went on: "Mr. Meehan is very much the gentleman. Sells standard authors on the instalment plan. He and Miss Briggs have spent an hour on that settee every evening for the last fifteen years. . . ." A tricky trill in thirds occupied her for a time. Then, imitating Mrs. Cadigan's honeyed utterance, "We're all like a cozy little family," she pursued, "but 'ware Oswald's mother! Oswald's a Cæsarean—" at his puzzled look her lips curled—"I refer to his arrival into this world—and Oswald's mother expatiates!" The melody was expressing itself in tremolo now. "We have our moments of excitement, too. Oswald is subject to the croup. We're dreadfully agitated when he has an attack—meet at his bedside in negligée while I administer Miss Briggs' remedy. . . ." She dinned his ears with the long passage in chords that terminated the number, and smiled her appreciation of the compliments issuing from the enthusiastic pair.

Again he felt baffled while he watched her. Again he sensed about her an ingredient alien to all she suggested as she sat there, opulently lovely, apparently a-teem with animation, irradiate of a high-spirited eagerness for all that life might bring. Again he thought to detect an impalpable hint of the "perfect lady." It seemed to become more pronounced with the little gasp of astonishment that escaped her when Miss Briggs and Mr. Meehan rose from the corner, bade them a prim "Good-night," and left the room.

"That's the first time," she commented, "since I've been here that they've gone upstairs before halfpast nine. They've deserted the Sheraton settee in our favour—an epoch-making readjustment of the Cadigan régime!"

"Miss Briggs is a maiden lady," he put in, anxious to resume a conversational intimacy cut short by the request for "Poet and Peasant." "Horrid term, maiden lady. Let's not discuss her."

"Undeniably a maiden lady," she agreed. "Horrid term, to be sure, but I'm one too, you know." Her lips folded into the precise line which seemed almost to neutralize her charms. "A maiden lady with a maiden lady's usual secret ambition to marry and settle down."

He was given no time to answer, no time even to digest the rather startling statement.

She caught the copy of *Mode* from the table.

"Look! Here are my pictures among the pages devoted exclusively to fashions. Here's a section on the stage. And here's the first page, always the picture of some woman of affluence and prestige. . . . Well, very soon I'll appear as a stage-beauty—I'm

soon to sign a contract. . . . And sooner or later I intend to be on that front page, featured as the bride of some man, I don't much care who, save that I shan't go a vestal to the arms of a wine opener, save that I want to be able to sport Doucets and Drécolls to my soul's content, and play Beethoven at times in a room all marbles and tapestries and lineage and things."

She left the piano stool, and walked slowly toward the door with him at her side. Midway across the room she paused. "Three stages to my career, you see, just as there were three successive trips in the beanstalk, the first for the hen, the second for the money bags, the third—" her voice became a sort of croon—"simply for a harp. Then the axe to the beanstalk!"

Banteringly she looked at him, and before the ardour in his eyes, hers wavered, and blinked as if she were dazzled by a sudden inundation of light.

For some time the two stood looking a little blankly at one another. He noted on her face what seemed a young girl's confused wonderment before a joyous firstness of things. He felt as if he and she were alone in a great stillness fraught with promise all the more beautiful because hardly definite enough to augur fulfilment. So swiftly had the onrush carried him away that he felt this the fit moment for protestations and pleadings.

He stumbled a step toward her. He was about to speak, about to catch her to him, here, in this room where the proprieties reigned, where the indentation left by a maiden lady's back on a sofa cushion bade him desist—when she folded her hands.

The gesture arrested him—broke the spell. At once it evoked a fugitive memory of a picture—was it a Rembrandt?—a picture of an old and worn-out woman with clasped hands, a woman who had put behind her, with a lifetime of toil, all the stress of joys and sorrows, who contemplated the antics of the less wise with an emotionless and kindly unconcern.

The hands Edith Channing had folded were the hands of a pianist, large and strong, with enlarged knuckles, bulging muscles, blunted finger tips.

Had she too put behind her all concern with the roseate and rankling?

It awed a little, it stirred him to compassion thus to see this gesture of world weariness stamp with a strange poignancy the almost infantile blink of her great eyes.

"The axe to the beanstalk!" She stepped toward the door.

Cool and even now, her chiselled tones reminded him dimly of something, of some one. "Commendable in theory at least—my principles, don't you think? For after all, the crazy flounderings of humanity resolve themselves at their sanest in some such solution of the problem: how to be happy though alive."

"You're a good bit like my Uncle Johnnie." The words escaped him just when, from the hall, she threw him another smile before mounting the stairway.

CHAPTER III

EXISTENCE in the Cadigan *pension* maintained itself in unruffled fashion. Little out of the ordinary happened. Everyone was low voiced and well mannered. Each morning at a quarter to nine Miss Briggs departed for the high school, Mr. Meehan for business, Oswald for kindergarten, Miss Channing for Hermine's. Each evening at seven they met at the dinner table and assembled later in the drawing room, where Miss Channing played and Oswald varied "The Sunshine of Your Smile," with "My Old Kentucky Home," and "The Holy City." By half past ten all was still.

A week after Moore had joined the circle that was so "like a cozy little family, you know," Miss Briggs had informed him twice that line 90 of "The Lotus Eaters" originally had "eyelids" for "eyelid," and Mrs. Cadigan's niece had solemnly confided to him that Oswald was a Cæsarean, and subject to the croup. He grew to understand why Miss Channing had been so perturbed when the drab looking pair left the Sheraton settee before half past nine. It was a startling deviation from the established régime, and to a seasoned lodger any deviation was almost as startling as if the hall clock that tolled out set hours for set occupations were to strike thirteen.

Time went on, however, and every evening at nine the drawing room was deserted by all but himself and the dark-eyed young woman of the brilliant smiles. He would look forward all day to that hour alone with her. Almost upon meeting her she had become a dominant interest. Still he resented the attitude of the "cozy little family" group.

When he had been a month among them it dawned on him that there was match-making in the air. Miss Channing and Mr. Moore were personages; Miss Channing and Mr. Moore were young and handsome; Miss Channing and Mr. Moore must mate—so it seemed to go.

On all sides he met arch glances, coy smiles, genteel intimations somewhat akin to the smirks and smudges of the frankly boorish at a rustic betrothal party. The idiots incensed him. Edith Channing, to be sure, was bewitching, but he resented the attitude of the others, and resented the way she seemed blithely to accept it as if she too conformed to their code. Moreover, he had a marked aversion to marriage.

In half-hearted fashion he dashed off another magazine cover, pocketed the cheque, and realizing how deeply he was becoming involved in a quagmire of indolence, became thoroughly disgusted with himself. He felt no longing to create something worthwhile, no spur to achievement. All that he had determined to accomplish when he left his uncle became as nothing before the appeal of a woman whose very name he did not know, a woman who bore herself like an empress and hailed from a mining town, who combined the attributes of an enchantress of men with virginal bewilderment and an old woman's world weariness, who played Chopin like a man, Bach like a musician, and was celebrated as "Hermine's Cinderella," a woman whose eyes softened when she looked at him, who irradiated a new tenderness, and smiled less often now.

He strove without avail to reconcile the conflicting elements which she seemed to exhale. With each passing day his curiosity augmented. And often it seemed to him that nothing so definitely expressed her as her likeness, which struck him when they first met, to a picture painted over by an unsympathetic hand. A desire absorbed him to erase the surface painting, to tear away the acquired personality.

Edith Channing, however, despite the new note of tenderness, never swerved from the plans she had confided to him. The next step of her career seemed on the eve of accomplishment. One day she returned to the house in fine fettle, waving a typewritten sheet.

"My contract, Lang! Everything's arranged. I'm to appear, not as the star, but far more important, as the star show girl of a new *revue*, the most prominent figure in the big ensembles, the girl who comes out as Columbia at the finish—you know. . . . Pose against a Joseph Urban background, say a few lines, do a few swaying dance steps. Hermine's Cinderella is so well known that I'm to be Cinderella in the *revue*—in the first act, among the embers, barefoot, and in a scanty frock of chiffon tatters; in the second act in a gown all crystal and flame colour, the most gor-

geous creation imaginable! And I'll see that my photos appear in the stage section of *Mode* soon. Oh, everything is turning out exactly as I wanted it to, youngster!"

She had developed a habit of calling him "youngster"—a habit which displeased him inasmuch as it seemed to relegate him to the ranks of the impossibly callow, and invest her with an unapproachable maturity. His very anxiety to play the man of the world before her led him to incoherent stammers and the manœuvres of a schoolboy. All his attempts to bring affairs to a more intimate status failed before her good-humoured raillery.

Often after they parted each evening he would watch her with reproach in his eyes, open the door next to his—then enter his room in a splenetic mood to sit sulking before the fire, glancing at intervals toward the door which showed above the chest of drawers. In a sentimental temper of mind he had taken down the Japanese print. The sight alone of the door which separated them seemed to bring her nearer to him.

So it went on from week to week. Each morning at a quarter to nine Miss Briggs departed for the high school, Mr. Meehan for business, Oswald for kindergarten, the woman who played Chopin like a man, and Bach like a musician, for Hermine's. Each evening they met at dinner and assembled later in the drawing-room, where Miss Channing favoured with "Poet and Peasant" and Oswald burst into song. . . .

Miss Channing's serenity, however, was perhaps ever so slightly disturbed. And Langham Moore acknowledged himself in a state of maddening suspense.

CHAPTER IV

One evening when he found himself particularly depressed, the mood was intensified by his fellow tenants' concern over Miss Channing's unwonted absence from the dinner table. It was her custom punctually to arrive ten minutes before the meal was announced. And Mrs. Cadigan's maternal solicitude over this non-appearance, Oswald's lisping conjectures, the anxiety of Miss Briggs and Mr. Meehan, antiphonally voiced, all expressed so forcibly a legitimate interest in what, to Moore, was no affair of theirs, all conveyed so subtly the conviction that Miss Channing, despite an incompatible exterior, was wrought of the same mould as they, that the dinner table small talk grated, galled, and, together with his own hankering for the sound of her mellow contralto, conduced to a well-nigh unendurable dejection.

Little animation evinced itself in the gathering around the closed piano after dinner. For some twenty minutes before bearing her offspring off to bed, Oswald's mother worried volubly over his pallor and hoarseness. Miss Briggs and Mr. Meehan held the Sheraton settee, while Moore, anxious to outstay them, yawned over a newspaper, and fidgeted in his chair. At nine o'clock after condoling with him in a simpering way that increased his irritation, the two departed.

He lighted a cigarette only to toss it away without a puff. He opened the piano and with one finger picked out a few Ring motifs, returned to the newspaper for some five minutes, and spent another ten in formulating a grim resolve no longer to idle, to start the very next day on a reduction of his theories to canvas that would arouse not only the world but perhaps even his impassive kinsman in the Ramapo hills.

And again, when the figure of his uncle loomed into his consciousness, he was struck by the way it seemed at once to evoke Edith Channing. Both, he felt, were essential to his scheme of existence, both seemed at once remote and near, both stirred him, by the measure of aloofness in their rapport with him, to exasperation. The desire to work

left him as suddenly as it had come. For another half-hour he lounged morosely on the settee. . . . Then Edith Channing came in.

The dark red and black fur of her costume accentuated the crimson of her cheeks and sparkle in her eyes. She was in high spirits, in a state of almost feverish jubilation. "Threw up my job to-day," she announced, sweeping across the room. "That stage of the game, please Heaven, is done and over with!"

It seemed to Moore that never before had she irradiated such a degree of elemental grandeur, of impetuous, savage splendour as now, in the toss of her head and ring of her glorious voice. "Quit this morning," she pursued. "Rehearsals began at ten, and I've spent the day learning what upper right and lower left mean, and discovering that a stage director may actually be unoriginal enough to tell the chorus to put more ginger in it. . . . And oh, Lang, my photos are to be featured in next month's *Mode*. I had a bit of pull, and managed it just as I'd planned. Everything's coming out exactly as I'd planned! I've made the two strikes and the third will follow soon! And I feel so—so triumphant, so gorgeously triumphant! I feel like playing the Hammerklavier Sonata, and playing it devilishly well. Shall I?"

The excited light in her eyes softened, deepened, and her smile died when she turned to him. "Don't look so unhappy, youngster. What's there to be unhappy about? Don't you want me to play for you? . . . Not after all the Hammerklavier, but the andante from the Brahms thing, the '*Der Abend dämmert, das Mondlicht scheint*,' andante—you know. Shall I play it for you, Lang, dear?"

At his nod her smile gleamed, but even more fleetingly than usual transforming itself on the instant into that precise fold of the lips which seemed almost to actuate her buoyancy with an element of drab prudery. She moved away from the piano, "Can't play after all. I forgot that it's after hours. If I disturbed the peace of the household after ten o'clock, I'd just about miss being asked to leave."

He made no comment, and although her lips parted in an attempt to break the silence, they closed without a word. For some time she stood staring a little vacantly at him. Upon her face he saw a maternal gentleness blent with a young girl's timidity. About her there was the allure of the unattainable, but of an unattainable that seemed ardently to beseech him for deliverance from the bonds that put her out of his reach.

He could see that she was keenly alive to his hurt, eager to assuage, eager to surrender. The colour deepened in her cheeks. Her hands quivered as if she were about to stretch them out to him. She swayed slightly toward him. . . . But before he could put in a word, again the lips narrowed into the line he found so unbeautiful. Hurriedly she crossed the room and went up the stairs.

It was some time before he followed, prey to a heavy gloom, at the same time aware of a new invigoration. For to him that flutter of her hands and slight sway had betrayed a momentous turning point. Affairs were approaching a crisis, and he was almost sure now that eventually she would not deny herself to him. As he reached the upper landing, Miss Briggs' door, which was to the left of his, opened. Mrs. Cadigan emerged, beaming upon him, and he caught, too, a glimpse of the school teacher deep in her text books at a study table. The very sight of these two deepened a growing certainty that for all the prim fold of her lips, Edith Channing's fate would not lead her to wedlock or spinsterdom.

Entering his room, he found himself averse to the idea of sleep. He stirred up the fire, flung himself upon the couch, and stared rather hopefully at the door that loomed above the chest of drawers. As once more he recalled that sudden deep-

ening of colour in her cheeks, the realization that affairs were hanging in a balance favourable to him, eased to such an extent that after some fifteen minutes of musing he yawned in content, his eyelids lowered, and, too lazy to leave the couch, he dozed off before the fire. . . .

The clock striking two half awakened him. He stretched out his arms indolently, turned on his side, and was floating in that state of well-being which just precedes a loss of consciousness . . . when a sound bestirred him, a faint, faraway rattling and jangling, it seemed at first. He sat up, blinking sleepily. Again the sound. . . . Was it the cautious rattling of a knob? Was it the slight jangling of a bunch of keys? Did it come from Edith Channing's room?

Thoroughly aroused, he sat bolt upright, his eyes fixed upon the door. There was an unmistakable rattling of the knob, then the sound of a key withdrawn, then silence. After a little, he heard the jangling again, again a key was inserted, and subsequently withdrawn. He waited in eager suspense while two more were tried without avail. At the fifth attempt, after another cautious rattling, he saw the door open an inch, to strike softly against the back of the chest of drawers. Instantly he hurried across the room. Through the aperture her smile greeted him.

"Push that thing out of the way," she whispered, "and very carefully, so that they won't hear downstairs—don't let it scrape against the floor."

When the opening widened to a foot, she thrust her head through. A mass of black hair hung over her shoulders. Her cheeks were extraordinarily flushed, her eyes extraordinarily bright. "I knew you'd still be up. Happened to find a key that fitted. Had to see you, Lang, and couldn't risk coming through the hall. I've lots to explain. . . . Push it just a bit further, another inch—so!" She slipped through and came to his side.

A silken robe coloured in deep blues and greens was wrapt about her, and her ankles showed above boudoir slippers. The room she came from was unlighted. From the windows, open for the night, a chill draught blew over the two that stamped with a certain eeriness this meeting in the still hours of the night. While in confusion they looked away from each other, the draught closed the door—closed it with a slight bang. Both started. He noticed that on this side the knob had been removed in order that the chest might be placed close against the door. He made a hesitant step towards her, only to halt when her lips parted.

"I came because I couldn't sleep, because I couldn't bear to think of your being unhappy, because there are things to be explained, and—and—" in a little break, the whisper became almost inaudible—"Because it's so wonderful to watch your eyes light up when you see me, youngster."

She looked at him through lowered lids in that inscrutable way which held him off, and at the same time seemed to plead for release from all that forced her to put him out of mind. He found himself for some inexplicable reason unable to speak, to meet her eyes, to do anything except venture another step. This time without a word she walked swiftly away to the fireplace and stood looking up at his uncle's portrait, over which the flames cast a ruddy glow.

The old man appeared to contemplate her with a sort of sceptical kindliness. For a long time she stood without moving a muscle, until it seemed to Moore that she was no more alive than the figure in the picture. And just as always, the thought of his uncle had linked itself so oddly with his every thought of her, as now his eyes shifted from the cool and courtly John Langham to this woman a-teem with youth and animation, this woman with flushed cheeks and gleaming eyes, with warmly tinted arms and ankles, of a sudden it occurred to him

that the same seal stamped the two. He was struggling definitely to discover wherein the strange likeness lay when she turned away from the picture.

"*World-sorrow*," she said simply, and sank among the cushions before the fire.

Thinking to mark a softening of her attitude, hastily he joined her. He was very much in love now, very deeply under the spell of her loveliness, very eager in his young impetuosity to have done with all quibbling—clumsy, too, embarrassed, awkwardly ardent. And yet the sheer force of his youth, and naïveté, and charm offset the callow gaucherie. The woman smiled, laid a hand over his. . . . But at the touch of her cool fingers he felt a pang of resentment. For to the gesture there was an emotionless quality which prepared him for her tranquil manner, and even, almost steely tones when presently she began to speak:

"This can't go on, Lang. That's mainly why I came in to-night—to make you understand. You're just the age and just the kind, and in just the mood to be carried away by a woman. And I'm not the least bit keen to play the siren. Too tempestuous and tiring that sort of thing. While as for marriage, can you imagine anything more spirit blighting than being *soigneuse*, on the one hand, or having you tied to my apron strings on the other? I've laid my plans carefully, dear. You don't fit in with them, and I won't switch from them, depend on that."

Before his hurt look her face changed. When finally she went on, there was no steeliness in her voice, only a troubled eagerness to make clear the misgivings that assailed:

"Try to understand, dear. Remember that for twenty years I was well acquainted with poverty, and toil, and hunger—with the parental diatribe and the parental wallop. And remember that right through all the shoddiness, there was the lure of music and of everything else that seemed beautiful—romance, lovers, clothes, luxury, the material all inextricably hodge-podged with the illusion—all leading me on. Why, when I was first able to take music lessons at fifty cents per, I'd grind out 'Hail, Columbia!' and 'The Old Oaken Bucket,' and sense the masters of whom I'd only heard, sort of sense them in the air somehow. And when I first met you, you weren't a stranger. Why, it was you who made me laugh in the foreman's face when he proposed. Remember that music was to effect the release from all the sordidness. There was to be a grand emancipation! Music would break the trammels! Remember, Lang, that since I was a tot all this led me on."

She paused. Not by a quiver of a muscle did she stir from her immobility, but a lifelessness fell over her attitude that heralded the flat, inflexionless voice with which she pursued:

"And remember that I saw myself in a mirror one day, growing bony, growing sallow—and already past twenty-two. Then I saw that I'd have to pay the price for material benefits by foregoing the big, stirring things. With the career, went all desire for affairs of the heart, for at the awakening the heroine of an amour became no more than a week-end sweetie somehow—and such prospects repelled. The best that could be effected was a shabby compromise. The very fibre of a man in such a dilemma would have prevented him from taking a sensible course. But by the grace of the gods, I was made of lesser stuff, of saner stuff, and chose the wiser way."

She held her hands set before her with the fingers outstretched into a Bach that might easily span an octave and three keys—looked meditatively at the misshapen knuckles, shrugged her shoulders, settled back among the cushions, and continued:

"Don't fancy for a second that I dupe myself by thinking that interpretative talent is high art, or that one of

the Olympians was lost to the world when I gave up a career. I'm just commonplace, and I maintain that I chose rightly. I chose to have the world woo me with type-written love letters in words of one syllable instead of flaming hieroglyphics, that's all. . . . Perhaps it all lies in the intrinsic difference between the sexes. You men must have hazard, and enterprise, and achievement, and despair. While women at their wisest to maintain a just balance, are the conservatives, the materialists, the ones who conform to codes. No man at the hour of his greatest achievement has known the content I know when first I got my job, settled into a niche—settled for life. A level head: an easy berth. That's what life means to me, Lang."

Very gently she laid a hand on his shoulder and immediately withdrew it.

"This is my last trip up the beanstalk, and I'm going to bring the harp down to the ground. That's why I'm sitting here talking my head off, for all the music in the air, dear."

A nod of finality stopped an impetuous arm about her. It had all struck him as lamentably garbled reasoning, to be laughed at, repudiated, swept away in a first tribute to the full red lips so alien in their alluringness to the words which had issued from them. But she had folded her hands, even as she had folded them on the night they first met, and with the same effect of world-weariness, and satiety, and a very genuine sorrow. And she had thrown off the slippers, holding her feet toward the flames, while she mused.

The dimpled ankles gave her the childlike aspect he had first glimpsed, when staring at him she had blinked as before a dazzling vision. Here was a woman at once cloyed with existence, and terribly eager for all it might hold. A wave of discomfiture passed over him. . . . It lifted when, as if against her will, her clasped hands fell apart and fluttered toward him.

When, cold and trembling, they met his, in a flash her whole attitude changed. The lips quivered and parted. Slowly the eyelids fell. And he saw, despite the earnestness of her discourse, despite that nod of finality, despite an ingrained disillusionment, despite convictions instilled by sheer force of will, resolutely adhered to, justified hitherto by material benefits commensurate to the renunciations entailed, despite all this, and without so much as a plea on his part other than a sulky drawing away, the woman yielding to a force before which her curious standards became as nothing.

It was very still. Even the fire burned steadily without a crackling, while the courtly old gentleman over the mantel, as if neither approving nor disapproving, blandly surveyed the two who stared at one another, both young, both eager for existence now, a sparkle in the man's eyes, in the woman's the gleam of tears.

At last she leaned a little toward him. For the barest instant her cheek grazed his. Then slowly her head dropped to his shoulder, and her fingers interlaced with his. He could hear her breathing like so many faint sobs. And as he caught her to him, words rose to his lips in an unintelligible mumble, high-flown, puerile entreaties, wild declarations, senseless, but for these two forcible enough to render meaningless the condemnation of a stupid world—inarticulate and barely audible, but for these two loud enough and distinct enough to drown all protest, all censure, all invective. . . .

CHAPTER V

And yet within a moment the extravagant outburst died in a feeble gulp. Within a moment peremptorily the proprieties silenced him. Within a moment from somewhere in the house there arose a horrible sound, strident, raucous, muffled by the walls—a sound like the stifled gasp of outraged decorum.

"Oswald has the croup!"

The muscles in her hands and arms tightened. Her eyes darted to the door separating the rooms, and roved from side to side in sudden alarm when she realized that the missing knob prevented her leaving except through the hall.

"Everybody wakes up—and they come for me—when he has an attack—"

Five seconds after the sound had disturbed them, she stood rigid, her face livid, her mouth twisted into an ugly grimace, her eyes still darting about the room in search for some means of escape. The sonorous, convulsive gasps continued, intermingled now with the sound of voices and footsteps. As if staking her all on a possible stroke of luck, she flew noiselessly across the room, threw open the door—

At the same instant the door to the left of his opened, and Miss Briggs stalked across the threshold.

The maidenly ankles were decently covered by felt juliets. A flannel wrapper was buttoned high to the maidenly chin. Six inches of braided hair hung from her head. Mechanically she stirred a dark mixture in a bowl, while her eyes narrowed as they travelled from the barefoot woman with loosened hair to the man in the chair before the fire. She seemed utterly disconcerted, ready for an explanation, unable at once to condemn the beautiful Miss Channing, who had been so unquestionably one of the Cadigan flock.

"Flaxseed and licorice," she announced primly, with the effect of granting a reprieve. "And rock candy, all melted down and the slightest dash of spirits. I keep it always on hand. It eases the little man. It—"

The clock furnished the last damning bit of evidence when it struck three. The spinster's jaws met in a condemnatory click. Scornfully she turned away and stalked down the stairs.

Rigid, motionless, Edith Channing continued to stand in the doorway. After a full minute, Moore crossed the room and led her back to the fireplace. She was in a daze. The arm he held hung limp. Her step was the shuffle of an automaton. Far more than disdain, he felt a deep pity that she should be affected to such a degree by nothing more than her impending excommunication from a group of miserably insignificant moral precisians.

"I'll be asked to leave." The contralto was a mere lifeless whimper. "I'll be asked to leave. I'll be asked to leave."

Again and again until they maddened him, she repeated the words, nodding her head slowly, wringing her hands, smiling the vague, foolish smile of a being temporarily deranged by an overwhelming catastrophe.

It was a long time before she appeared conscious of his presence and of the gasps and footsteps in the room below. At last, by indistinguishable degrees, her face changed. It remained livid, but the twisted mouth settled into a straight line. She passed her hand across her forehead, aroused herself, gradually became an astute woman at bay, brought to a sorry pass, and ready to call upon extreme defence in order to vindicate herself.

But the inertness left her body. Coldly she regarded him, and he saw a cunning look in her eyes. He saw a woman not quite beaten, thinking rapidly, and ready unscrupulously to employ the full resources of deftly conceived strategics against a threatened downfall.

"We'll get away with it somehow, Lang," she whispered. "We'll put one over on those prudes—somehow—let me think—"

When a half-hearted smile told him that she had arrived at a more or less auspicious conclusion, at once it was followed by a look of sadness and sympathy that seemed to ask his pardon for an injury she was forced in this extremity to inflict against her will.

"Youngster," she announced dejectedly, "you must be gallant and propose marriage. It seems the only way."

There was so much pain revealed to him by her wry smile that without questioning all the solution entailed, he took her in his arms, forced a ring of gladness into his voice.

"Edith, you don't know how happy. . . . Will you—"

"I most certainly will, Lang."

Brusquely she released herself and continued in a hurried undertone:

"Now let me tell you what must be done. You're to do a sketch of me in this blue and green thing, barefoot and with my hair down. It must be finished by morning—one of your quick impressions, hack work, trade goods. Casually we'll announce our engagement. Casually we'll let it be known that the daily grind gave us only the midnight hours for the completion of this masterpiece which, after it's done duty as a magazine cover, will grace Mrs. Cadigan's drawing room—a souvenir of happy days, and so on, and so on. Oh, trust me, we'll get away with it somehow—gush, sentimentalize, give them the grand manner if they're dubious. Grand manner them, outraged virtue them till they quail. We'll put it over, but oh, Lang—" her voice quivered, broke—"I'm so sorry and ashamed. I wonder if you'll ever forgive me. I didn't want to come down to earth this way. It's so unfair to you, dear."

Now that the crimson tints were returning to her cheeks, and the rich timbre to her voice, the prospect of possession alone banished all misgivings. Again he swept her into his arms, and for the first time without resisting she clung to him. Eager entirely to dispel the unhappy look that still lurked in her great eyes, he tried to soothe her; began to speak without forethought the first words that came into his mind.

"It's coming out splendidly, Edith. A stroke of fate has adjusted everything. We'll be happy. I'll do my damnedest to make you happy, dear. You're all worn out and upwrought. You need a rest. To-morrow I'll telegraph Uncle Johnnie, and the two of us will leave this fool house, and go up to him for a while. You'll like it there. You'll like my uncle; and he'll like you awfully——"

"He'll like me awfully, eh?"

She spoke so sharply, freed herself so abruptly from his encircling arms that he was confounded. Matters had been progressing at a pace rapid enough to put him mentally out of breath. And he could not at once grasp the import of the sudden alertness with which she wheeled, once more to scrutinize John Langham's portrait. But dimly he realized an imperative need of reverting her attention to him; laid a hand on her arm, which she shook off, ventured an uneasy "Edith, dear," which she seemed not to hear. Deep in reflection she stared on at the portrait, as if oblivious to everything save the dawn of a new idea, the first hazy inklings of another and more satisfactory way out of the predicament.

Her engrossment provoked him almost to anger. It occurred to him that these two, the old man and the radiant young woman, were arriving at a secret understanding from which he was to be excluded. For the first time he felt a premonition of trouble at the unexpected turn of events. Whether it was because what linked the woman to his uncle in his thoughts of her was a remoteness which made her all the more captivating because unattainable, or because both impressed him as beings who had put behind them the hankering for hazard, the search for the *imprévu*,—beings, therefore, steeped in a chill, drab wisdom, all at once he realized that Edith Channing had stirred him far more when she seemed out of reach than when she had lain passive in his arms.

Now that the emotional surge was on its wane, the idea of life companionship lost much of its attraction. And, too, now that a vista of entrancing uncertainties had dwindled to a dull prospect of wedlock, he saw that the marriage of convenience she had planned

was far less treasonable to her rich loveliness than the career of a footstool spouse which he knew she would embrace in impulsive atonement for having dragged him into the fold of the lawfully mated. The situation was becoming even more involved. And yet, even as with every second his perplexity increased, over the woman's face an unexpected serenity was slowly establishing itself. Her shoulders straightened. She was holding her head high.

"My feet are planted on solid earth, Lang!" The glad ring in her voice astounded him. "To--morrow you'll telegraph your Uncle Johnnie, will you? To-morrow you'll take your affianced to meet your Uncle Johnnie, will you? I wonder if he's as safe in his retreat as he imagines himself. He'll like me awfully, will he? Believe me, I'm determined that he'll like me awfully; I'm terribly determined! A vast estate, a fine old name, prestige, wealth—and that face! Lang, I've climbed down from the beanstalk." The contralto resounded jubilantly. "For up there in the hills I'm going to jilt you, dear!"

She stepped from his side, paused to whisper a hurried "Thanks for a lovely interlude," then walked across the room, and back to the fireplace. He recognized the firm tread, the perfect poise, the magnificent assurance of the Edith Channing he had known before a transitory surrender to an ineluctable spell had brought the gentle uncertainty to her manner. He could hear an excited whispering in the hall, and the very fact that it disturbed her not in the least intimated how completely she had regained her equilibrium. Her arms folded triumphantly, her head thrown back, all smiles she addressed the portrait:

"Uncle Johnnie, I'm matrimonially inclined!"

Of a sudden, Moore became prey to an onrushing loneliness. These two who were dear to him seemed already to have arrived at the secret understanding wherein he was no factor. It dawned upon him that this woman was supremely capable of storming even the buttresses of a nirvana, that while her ends and his kinsman's were virtually the same, hers, the methods of aggression, gave her overwhelming odds over a system of discreet retreat that had landed John Langham in hermitdom.

Moreover, were there not perhaps vestiges of an erstwhile *homme de monde* in the sixty-year-old who never approved or disapproved, vestiges which might render him not altogether immune to a loveliness at once regal and barbaric, to a voice like the peal of a bell, and especially to the large, strong hands with their blunted fingertips,—the hands that could span an octave and three keys.

"Uncle Johnnie, I've designs on you!"

After all, he wondered, was there any solution more feasible than this which conduced to despondency even as subtly it assuaged? The bruise of unfulfillment rankled, but already the boy sensed an approaching contentment. His curiosity was satisfied. The woman no longer baffled. There was no longer the maddening suspense, no longer an issue hanging in the air. And when finally she who called herself Edith Channing turned to him with outstretched arms, he felt before her, as before the beautifully bungled creation of some arch joker and artist, a certain awe.

"Kiss your auntie, youngster," she was murmuring. "Kiss the—the imminent Mrs. Langham, nevvy mine."

THE DISTRESSING PREDICAMENT OF AN HONOURABLE LITTLE BOY

By Ian MacKinnon

I CAME upon a little boy seated by the roadside and weeping bitterly.

And being moved with compassion, I halted, and thus addressed this piteous urchin: "Little boy, wherefore weepest thou, making thy little nose so moist and untidy?"

And, behold, he gave answer: "I am weeping because I do not believe in God."

And I spake in tones of soothing: "Little boy, do not cry. Neither make moan so bitterly. For lo! There are millions of us anthropoids with the belief which you find it impossible to embrace, and where do we get off? What does it get us? Does it get us the bluebird? Nay. It gets us Maeterlinck. Does it get us the elixir of life? Nay. It gets us Oliver Lodge and Cozened Doyle. Does it get us loving leaders? Nay. It gets us the Rev. Dr. Wilhelm Sunday, the Anti-Saloon League, and Sabbath School superintendents who mulct us for testaments to take the joy from the lives of inoffensive heathen niggers and Chinese. So do not cry, little boy."

"You fail to grasp," replied the little boy, "the reason why I weep and make my moan. I am an honourable little boy, and feel bound to state my real convictions upon all vital subjects. And my father is the rector of St. Swithin's. And when I state to him my real conviction in this matter he will beat hell out of me."

And he continued to weep and lament marvellous loud.

A WOMAN should kiss carefully. She should remember that a successful business is only built by having customers come again.

MARRIAGE makes a man and a woman one. Which one, is the question that then remains to be decided.

THE TRADITION OF THE HOUSE OF MONSIEUR

By Maurice Davis

I

TO-NIGHT Monsieur was going out and he was careful, standing before his mirror, slickly to brush back the hair he was pleased to imagine made him reminiscent of Liszt, Handel, Mozart—even Massenet.

Monsieur was a fairly round little man with a crimson face much more spheroidal than the modest paunch which drooped a little in what appeared to be an effort to meet his short legs.

A curiously unique face it was, having, in lieu of cheek-bones, two rosy knobs that crowded the eyes somewhat, with a tendency to transform what would have been almond-shaped eyes into meagre Oriental slits. And from between these slits, which showed very little of white, dark-blue twinkled—one was never sure with just what feeling. His eye-brows, iron gray, were spare but of uncommon length and curled about as they left the apex of his nose and started for his ears, as if they had been undecided whether to go on or not, and had finally settled on the former course. His nose was short and suggestive of a Celtic ancestor, but this incongruity was balanced by his hair, which bespoke the old days and aristocracy of France. Brushed back as it was, it recalled in him nothing of the fanatic. A moustache of a pepper-and-salt mixture which trailed cautiously round the edges of his mouth and merged itself in a straggling Vandyke was not the least of the curious assemblage of features which made up Monsieur's curious face.

Monsieur, when seen in the public street, inevitably wore a black slouch hat. There was nothing singular about this hat, but if one were imaginative it would require no straining to envisage the ill-omened feather of earlier periods stuck high in it. This illusion was enhanced by the coat, a long, black cloaklike garment, the collar, in any weather, customarily turned up.

Monsieur finished his *toilette*. Before instructing Nancy, the lady of a thousand tasks, what to say if the telephone should ring or anybody should call at the brownstone house, he reread a letter that had come in the last mail. It said:

"Although you don't know me, I've heard about you from Louis. I'm living here for the moment at 4—E. 44th St. I got out of the Institution yesterday and boarded a train for the city right off. Do you know where Louis is? I want to write. Please tell me, won't you?

"MAY GARDNER."

II

HIS closed cab drew up to a red-brick house and stopped. He thought it was a tenement until he saw the peculiar turrets and white-framed windows, which stamped it as a once pretentious boarding-house now on the decline. Telling the driver to wait, Monsieur mounted the few steps and entered the hall. The smell, once his ring was answered, convinced Monsieur that the place still had some pretensions to respectability, as

a boarder would have to be decently respectable to tolerate it.

A woman quite as round as Monsieur and quite as ruddy directed him up two flights of much-worn carpet to a room at the rear of the house, where he paused at a door and knocked.

"Come in, M'sheer," called a girlish voice.

Slightly surprised, Monsieur entered a moderately large room. He was careful to close the door behind him. He had a strong premonition of what was going to be said, and he was afraid outsiders might be entertained by it. One of the first things to strike his eye was an old-fashioned speaking tube, through which the landlady had doubtless heralded his presence.

Then he turned to face his hostess squarely.

Whatever Monsieur had composed his mind to see—in whatever human guise he had pictured the writer of the strange note—he was surely not prepared for the fragile little creature who came forward and unceremoniously relieved him of his hat.

"Have any trouble finding me?" she asked, he thought, surely, with a glimmer of a smile.

He mumbled something, busy in the double effort to collect himself and partly comprehend anything at all of what now appeared to be an impossible situation. What a petite creature! Fragile as a piece of Sèvres—and as rare. Her age he guessed to be sixteen. Under his breath he addressed the image of Louis rather freely.

"What do you say?"

Monsieur was on the point of taking the chair she indicated, and he paused. She had sunk down opposite.

"I said—the comfort is here. You—wanted to see me?" It was his wish to learn the worst at once.

"Have you heard anything from —Louis?" she asked.

He observed that her manner was neither as frank nor as easy as she would have had him believe from the carelessness of her tone.

"*Oui*—yes, I have sent to Cambridge the telegram. He is at the Harvard what you call a frees—a—"

"A freshman?"

"*Oui*, freshman. I expect to have him home soon—to-morrow."

He waited anxiously, but all she said, following a pause, was:

"I'm so glad."

On the heels of another pause, he asked tentatively:

"Then you did not have to see me about anything—more?"

The childish blue eyes, which had attracted him earlier, looked up with an even braver attempt at frankness. It was a youthful gaze made wise before its time, to which phenomenon the worldly scrutiny of Monsieur was not insensible.

"No. That was all. It was good of you to come, and—"

III

MONSIEUR did not sleep well that night. Before leaving the girl he had delicately wound his way into the question of her age, and was surprised to hear her say eighteen. Well, everything considered . . . still . . .

He had, to be sure, asked questions which she either evaded or invented answers for. He soon saw that whatever had transpired between her and Louis was sacred to her. A wonderful little woman! He doubted if it would be safe to criticise even Louis' scarves so that she might hear. Apparently, merely the news that Louis was coming back was enough to silence her and—*What* an embroglio! What was one to do?

The sandman answered Monsieur with a sprinkle of sleep that, while light, kept him in bed until nine the next morning, when a persistent noise through the house brought him up blinking to a sitting position. A door or two banged; there were springy footsteps on the stairs and a sudden gust of wind preceded the presence of the young Monsieur.

Dark as any scion of the goddess Pyx, with a countenance clear and good-looking, and interesting beyond its interesting reflection of the most reckless of wild impulses, the young Monsieur stood before his father.

"What's up, Pop?" he grinned, carefully aiming his cap at a distant chair and lodging it precisely in the cushioned seat.

"*Vous êtes*," returned the old man, dryly.

At this the young Monsieur burst into quick impatience, the grin being swamped in a cloudy frown.

"Good Lord, Pop, can that Frog!"

"*C'est moi*," said the old man with more mildness, as if he required explaining. "Had you lived more in France—"

"Well, I didn't. I was born here. What if my parents *were* travelling at the time, and later carted me back to Paris? That doesn't make *me* a Frog. I was born here and I'm glad of it. I got your telegram."

"Well?"

"Well, I thought you were—well, sick. That's why I rushed down this way. How do you feel? Now don't answer in Frog!"

"I feel *b*—good. And now I get up—so. Now, if you will *allez en bas*—"

"Do you do it to aggravate me—or what? Gee whiz, Pop, you'll *never* learn—will you?"

"Ask Nancy," the old man went on, heedless of the interruption, "to have breakfast—soon."

Slowly, thoughtfully, Monsieur made his toilette and dressed for breakfast, his mind intent on the modern young man he claimed as a son. Sometimes Monsieur was very near the gods, if a great heart full of love will conjure the propinquity, and at such times his pride and affection acted as a double buffer to stabs. Louis, like the ancient kings, could do no wrong; like the kings, certainly a bit rascally—playfully so, perhaps—but never to the point where his gallantry or chivalry would suffer.

Had one suggested the possibility of the young Monsieur's being spoilt, one would have found himself involved in a discussion of the boy's superb ancestry. Blood, Monsieur would tell the indelicate person, blood, rich in quality and rare of its kind—*eh, bien!*—and in the growing years what could one expect?

The young Monsieur, however, pretended to despise, or really did despise, the very traditions and ancestry that gave him his kingly exemption. The preparatory school, where Frenchmen were almost unanimously accepted as eating frogs whole, probably had had much to do with the young Monsieur's curious distaste for the language, literature and customs of the race. One thing was certain. From the time he was sixteen, the young Monsieur had not tolerated the French language spoken in the house, and was the power behind the throne in the sudden dismissal of the French maid whom Nancy, a Celt, had succeeded.

Monsieur was thinking of these things—or many of them—as he sat down opposite Louis at the breakfast table.

Gingerly he tapped his egg on the transparent edge of the china receptacle and slowly looked up. He pretended to sigh—or it may have been that he did sigh.

"Ah, how nice now, if I had a daughter to strike my egg in the morning," he suggested.

Louis' eyes shot up with quick curiosity.

"What in—gee whiz, Pop, what's getting into you lately? First you get a bug about going to France for a while and having me going to a Frog school, and now—*now* you want a *daughter!* Widowers, in *this* country, don't have daughters."

And Louis fell back to his breakfast.

"A daughter-in-the-law. What?"

"Well, that's regular enough."

"I have mine."

"Your what?"

"The one I have in my mind."

"I'll bet it's a Frog you've got in your mind."

"No, it is no F-f-rog. You know her."

"Eh?" Louis looked up with genuine interest. "Who is she?"

"*Mademoi*—Mees Gardner."

The young Monsieur dropped his fork and stared, making no effort to conceal his surprise.

"Where in thunder did *she* drop from?"

"The Institution."

"What Institution?"

"Wherever she was. I did not ask her. I—I did not want to know."

Louis looked relieved.

"That was right. It's none of anybody's business."

"Her age is—do you know?"

"Oh, about my age—a little younger perhaps."

"When did you meet her?"

"Last year. She and the Prep were in the same town."

"Is she a—a good girl?"

The young man reddened perceptibly.

"Good Lord! I really don't know. How could *I* know? Do you think I spend my time investigating the reputation of every girl I pal around with?"

There was a pause. The young Monsieur broke it.

"I guess, since everything is all right, I'll beat it back to Cambridge this afternoon."

Monsieur shook his head.

"No—not this afternoon. Maybe tomorrow. I have business to-day, but to-night we will talk. *Bien, eh?*"

IV

THE library of Monsieur was a shadowy, cozy room, with a modest reading lamp, two tables, a few engravings and nothing like neutrality in the selection of the books it contained. The volumes were neither well assorted nor well arranged. Some were shelved awry, some stiff-laced. Rousseau, for instance, winked at Villon, who winked back. De Musset had a perky air, while Beaumarchais gazed on complacently. Dumas and Balzac appeared to feel out of place, especially the former, who reminded one of a well-fed kitten near the warmth. Hugo glared down on everybody from his pinnacle on the highest shelf, which probably accounted for Voltaire's lip, which curled on the sub-adjacent shelf.

It was here that, after they had drunk their wine and the young Monsieur to please his father had lighted a cigar, that Monsieur opened up a new confidence about himself.

There was an old family tradition in the noble house of Monsieur which said that inter-family lying was unknown to the house. Many a Monsieur had lied like a gentleman to other houses when occasion demanded, but when a Monsieur was questioned by a *Monsieur* tradition said that the truth prevailed. The young Monsieur had known this, but he had never heard what the old man now told him.

"You must know, Louis, that in France we were rich, but not rich in the way Americans are. Did you ever hear how I made my fortune? No, you could not know. I gambled for it."

"You *what?*"

"I gambled—I, a rich man. For five nights—you shall see the newspaper clippings—I gambled in a famous house in Paris. I did not lose on any one of those five nights. Without your dear mother I did not want Paris. I did not want France. I courted America. A new land, which would help me to—to keep myself—to—"

"I understand."

"And so—I got—got what I wanted to have."

The old man gazed off reflectively.

The young Monsieur appeared to be interested in the ticking of the bronze clock over the fireplace. At last he turned slightly.

"Is that why you wear those clothes? Is that the way a Parisian gambler gets himself up?"

"Not all the time," Monsieur answered.

Then he stirred, as if he suddenly remembered what he had intended to say from the beginning.

"You have never lied to me, Louis."

"No, I haven't," the young Monsieur admitted.

"Why?"

"I don't know," Louis shrugged.

"But I can tell you why. It is in the blood. Our family has not lied to members of the family. There is no history of a lie. To others—yes; to ourselves—no!"

"Well? You don't suppose you've caught me in a lie?"

"No, no, Louis. I was just thinking about that little *mademoi*—girl."

The light left Louis' face the way sunbeams leave the dark, suspicion and puzzlement clouding his eyes.

"Well?"

"There is no doubt in my mind that not much of good might come from such friendship as you gave in this case."

"See here, Pop, *you* understand that. I don't like to put it in words and—What *am* I talking about! Any man, and *you certainly*, know the world, knows that these things happen, and—"

"Yes. We understand. But sometimes we all do not understand how to help. How could we explain this to *votre mère?* Your dear mother was always trying to make us men over. '*Tout homme a une passion dominante,*' I used to say to her. 'Then let it,' she would say softly, 'be for good.' And so I have been thinking of her ever since—this girl—"

"What did she tell you?" The young Monsieur was concerned with the present.

"*Ne . . . rien*—nothing."

"I thought maybe she gave you a story—you know—and got you excited over her side of it."

If Monsieur was convinced that Louis never would lie to him, the young Monsieur was as sure as he was of his cigarettes that Monsieur would not be the one to break the ridiculous tradition.

"No. If she had done that I would hesitate. She was so good, so brave."

Louis shook his head impatiently.

"But you can't help—that's all there is to it."

For answer, as if he had waited for this ultimatum to decide a course of action already planned, Monsieur arose and opened a drawer under the table. From this he selected a deck of cards and motioned his curious son to the table.

"I want her for a daughter, *mon fils*. Once, as I told you, when I wanted money—much money—I played all to have what I wanted. I and *mon fils* cannot live as we have been doing with the knowledge of this girl between us. So, *mon enfant,* one of us is going to marry her."

"Are you *insane?*" The young Monsieur was utterly incredulous. A second look at his father, however, convinced him that Monsieur was not only sane but determined. At the realization the colour left his face and he trembled a little. This was unheard of, preposterous! And yet—the family, as he knew from tradition, had done strange things during the life of its uncrowned dynasty.

"Well? Would you have me marry *l'enfant?*"

"You? *You!* Good God! No!"

"Why not?"

"It's absurd—and you know it!"

"Her position—maybe it is absurd?"

"Yours would be worse. You'd make it worse. I—I just couldn't stand it."

"Ah, you could not bear the—the memories?"

The young Monsieur groaned *audibly.*

"That's not the worst."

Monsieur hesitated.

The white-faced boy before him was more visibly distressed than he could remember ever having seen him. It hurt. With his expressive dark eyes and fair, pale skin, he was his mother in her youth standing before Monsieur.

He shook himself, as if by the action he dissolved a jarring fantasy, and essayed to say:

"There was a—"

He could not do it. He saw as he spoke the line of ancestors stretching back in the past to remote ages, the look upon their stern, gay, and handsome faces, which, however, cast in Nature's mould, wanted not of a characterizing

nobility, and it caused him the nearest sensation he had ever experienced to a faltering wince. With a supreme effort he faced the breaking of the tradition.

"There was *une enfant*," he concluded simply.

The young Monsieur accepted this in silence, although it was noticeable that he stiffened a little.

"I never knew. You believe me—say you believe!"

"No doubt. You were careful not to leave her a writing address."

"I—I was afraid. . . ." Slowly the young Monsieur clenched his white-knuckled, slender hands, and as slowly unclenched them. "Did you see—the child?"

Monsieur shook his head.

On the polished surface of the table the cards lay where they had been dropped. For several moments young Monsieur stared meaninglessly at the slightly dishevelled deck. The preposterous gamble would not be made now. No need for that. He knew what he had to do, and he set himself to do it in a manner that must have set his line of ancestors to nodding at one another like palm fronds in a breeze.

"Have you the address?"

Without a word Monsieur reached into an inner pocket and produced the envelope he had received the day before. The letter had been carefully taken out. The young Monsieur accepted it, studied it a few moments, and hesitantly started to go. At the door he changed his mind and returned.

"Forgive me, Dad!"

"No, no, *mon fils*, forgive me!"

V

MIDNIGHT came, but young Monsieur did not. As a consequence of his anxious waiting Monsieur grew tired, and undressed for bed. Here his anxiety was not lessened, since he became engrossed in prosecuting a strange ethical proceeding against himself, in which he called Duty as a witness against the ignominy with which he was charged for the breaking of a superb tradition.

History is replete with the wild, quixotic deeds Frenchmen have performed for the aid or comfort of the feminine heart, but he wondered if a gentleman of France had ever gone this far before. To lay down one's life—meagre, stupid in its consequences as compared to offending a far-reaching line of kingly nobles, who, though dead, had been kept fresh in the family memory by the very flame he had that night extinguished. It would never burn again—it could never burn again. Some far distant day, when he was long dead and gone to increase the superb line, a descendant would hark back into a far chamber of memory and tell to a still younger Monsieur how the family of Monsieur—until a fatal evening—had religiously held aloof from inter-family lying.

Suddenly Monsieur checked these reflections and half sat up. The room was dark and his sight was none too good, but he thought he had heard a step. He had indeed. It was in the room.

"*Où es-tu, mon cher père?*" asked a greatly altered voice.

"Here, *mon enfant*."

"Everything is all right, Dad. She is coming to-morrow. I thought I'd tell you, before going to bed, that the baby died. Good-night, *mon père*."

It had been almost impossible for him to reach a semi-drowsy state before, but now, however, for a man who had only a few hours before worried a whole line of ancestors by the breaking of a precious tradition, Monsieur slept well.

THE RENUNCIATION

By L. M. Hussey

I

HAMMOND was pleased to find a home among these people. In his condition he saw nothing objectionable in their peculiarities. They interested him, both. Ethel Carton was naturally the more impressive personality, but Carton himself was interesting, if for nothing other than his extraordinary negligibility. Then, afterward, young Burton entered the scene. The atmosphere of their home might have depressed a healthy, unmeditative man, but it had no such effect upon Hammond.

He considered himself lucky to discover such an agreeable haven. During the first year of his physical misfortune he had lived in the private hospital of "specialists" who held out solemn hopes of curing him. After that he made the uncomfortable rounds of the sanatoria, the mountain resorts, the baths, the spas. His paralysis remained unimproved; indeed, it progressed to a certain point where it became stationary. He could still move about a little, using a pair of sticks.

Then he became resigned. He decided it was ridiculous to spend any more of his money on quacks and quack ideas. He found himself with a pronounced nostalgia for his home city and the few acquaintances whom he supposed might be persuaded to come and see him there. His parents were dead, but there was still a married sister to whom he could go, temporarily.

She received him decently enough; of course, he had no intention of staying with her permanently, or even for any considerable length of time. In addition to the fact that she obviously did not wish to be encumbered with his care, he was not at ease in her home. The three children annoyed him. He desired a home in some very quiet household, amongst unobtrusive people, people who, giving him certain necessities, would be otherwise indifferent to him.

It was in his sister's house that he met Ethel Carton.

She did not come there as a guest, but in a professional way; she gave piano lessons to the younger children and an hour of French every week to the older boy.

Hammond saw her first as she was seated at the piano, teaching little Helen to play five-finger exercises. He stumbled in upon them unexpectedly, and was about to excuse himself; the woman, with a swift comprehension, arose and begged him to come in and sit down; he could in no way disturb the lesson. She saw that it would be difficult for him to voyage to another room at that moment.

He took a seat near the window. Mrs. Carton resumed her place beside the child, and presently they began playing silly duets together, a thing that pleased little Helen.

He was interested and somewhat surprised by the aspect of this piano teacher. She looked less vapid than most of the women he had seen in that profession. She was tall and in her movements distinctly deliberate—she was the sort that gives one an impression of significant reserve, potentialities for action, for anger, for passion, perhaps even for joy. It was evident that her pupil, contrary to the frequent case, respected her.

Hammond described her face as

"controlled." His impression was that she carried on a certain war with herself, with obscure impulses within her breast. If anything else, she looked a little sullen.

Certainly her mouth had a touch of sullenness to it; the lips were full and what had been, no doubt, their curve in girlhood was now more firm. The lips drooped a trifle. The eyes were in keeping, for they were blue and not very warm. She wore her hair, which was plentiful and a real gold, in restrained coils, which were attractive on her well-shaped head.

The interesting observation coming to Hammond was that this woman, more than a little frigid now, could easily be otherwise, *had* been otherwise, in fact. Her aloof manner in no way repelled him. He felt that he would enjoy knowing her.

Perhaps it was his interest, his receptiveness, coupled with the impulse to compassion that his condition aroused, that made these two acquainted. They were formally introduced a few days later by his sister. After that Hammond made it a practice to be an unobtrusive listener during the piano lessons, and then he and Mrs. Carton usually had a little chat.

They were very impersonal talks; she said scarcely anything about herself. But they established, nevertheless, an air of sympathy between the two; either one would doubtless have been sure of the other's sympathy. And Hammond's initial interest and first friendly impression were sustained.

But it was not until after the passage of several months that the arrangement of living with the Cartons was effected. It developed through Hammond's frank explanation of his circumstances.

"What I'm looking for," he told Mrs. Carton, "is some quieter place, where people will put up with a useless fellow like me. I can't stay with my sister for ever. The sanatoria are impossible."

His statement seemed to afford her some unusual radiation—and then she made her suggestion.

"I wonder would you be satisfied in our home?" she asked.

It was the first time she had ever used a form of "we," an acknowledgment of someone other than herself. Hammond knew that there must be a Mr. Carton, but speculation about him was very hazy and ambiguous; the fact that he had always remained unmentioned made of him something equivocal. Even now his existence had been no more than implied.

But Mrs. Carton's suggestion was very appealing. They talked the business over frankly and he finally determined on the venture. He was glad to go. In some way the change seemed promising. That was his vague impression, and had he been asked to explain it he could never have done so.

II

Of course Hammond met the mysterious Mr. Carton immediately after taking up his quarters in the Carton household. As a matter of fact, there was nothing mysterious about the fellow—he was simply one of the world's ineffectuals. In personality he was agreeable, in a diffident sort of way. He had a tendency, Hammond thought, to be suspicious, although there was nothing definite upon which to base this idea.

Plainly, he was one of those who, beginning life with ideals of accomplishment beyond the capacity of their genius, had been easily defeated by the unidealistic and uncompassionate realism of existence. He had lost his illusions, and acquired no compensating armour of cynicisms for his protection. His was the sort that cannot forget their defeats, who live in the torment of a reiterated consciousness of failure. His front to the world only very thinly disguised his constant self-depreciation.

Physically he was a good-looking man, discounting his peculiar aspect of weakness. He was big enough, his head was well shaped, his features regular—the nose was a trifle too small for a man—and when he smiled his face

was often appealing. Although about forty, his dark hair was thick and disordered, like a boy's.

When unconscious of observation his brown eyes were mild and a little dreaming; when he looked at you his pupils seemed to contract, he frowned a little, and altogether the impression was that of one who needed the aid of glasses.

Hammond saw from the beginning that he had very little voice in the affairs of the household; Ethel Carton was the dominant one, through necessity.

By her teaching she contributed the main support. Carton made an uncertain few dollars as an itinerant photographer; it was a very ambiguous business, but Hammond found out presently that he was one of those who snap children and then endeavour to sell the finished photographs to their parents.

He had a little room in the house full of an immense number of photographs, somewhat interesting because most of them were of a fantastic nature.

He very soon became friendly with Hammond and little by little divulged the facts about his abandoned "ideals."

The fantastic photographs were nearly all the products of his earlier, enthusiastic years. He had gone in then for some sort of "artistic photography"; he had even dabbled around in chemicals, hoping to do something with colour photography. Hammond divined that he had deemed himself an artist, on the threshold of discovering a new art, that is, an art as significant as any of the major arts, like music or sculpture.

Witnessing the results of his efforts, which had been achieved mainly by means of a bagful of trivial tricks, with a touch here and there of unimportant originality, it all looked more or less silly. The man had obviously failed, but his was not the tragedy of an heroic failure. He was, rather, the victim of an absurd delusion.

However, Hammond found himself among interesting people. Moreover, he seemed to have arrived at a time when something was in the air; he felt that almost immediately.

There was, in fact, a change in Ethel; she was subtly different from the woman whom he had met several months before. She gave him the impression of a more profound repression, as if, in the obscure battles of her heart, fresh causes and fresh necessities were clamouring for a voice.

Yet it was not until some weeks had passed that Hammond connected the tense atmosphere with the appearances of Arthur Burton, who was almost the sole visitor to that house.

Burton was so young and merely because of his youth so seemingly negligible that the knowledge of his influence came with the shock of an intense surprise.

Hammond first saw the boy shortly after taking up his quarters with the Cartons and soon he became accustomed to him as a frequent visitor—he was there three or four times a week.

He had come to know Carton in some way—it was Carton himself who brought him the first time. In the beginning he and Carton used to talk a little about art and occasionally the latter, in a temporary condition of spiritual recrudescence, would state some of those beliefs in which he no longer had the courage of faith.

They used to sit together in the little living room, Ethel apart from the rest. She seldom entered into the conversation; she ignored her husband's opinions. And it came to Hammond that these same ideas, this ridiculous "art," must have intrigued her at one time—how long ago!

Watching her, seeing the full slope of her shoulders as she sat at the piano, the slight movements of her arms as she touched the keys into aimless melodies that were scarcely material enough for sound, the slightly backward-tilt of her fine head revealing those severe strands of coiled gold, Hammond experienced a compassionate emotion, mingled with a depressing knowledge.

How ruthlessly the years go, he thought; they had passed over this woman without pity, yet she was courageous—if she had lost her dreams, at least she yielded none of her pride.

She and Burton seldom conversed. They almost seemed to avoid each other. Once or twice Hammond thought that probably she held all her husband's acquaintances in the same estimation as Carton himself.

Then it developed that young Burton could play the piano. Perhaps he had been diffident, but certainly he had concealed his skill for a long time.

Ethel was a really able performer. She played a little heavily perhaps; she had a masculine touch. Burton was persuaded to try duets with her, and after they had played together every time he came. They seemed to do it as a duty, without desire, without pleasure, as if commanded. Hammond wondered whether Carton specially desired this performance.

During the duet playing Hammond and Carton sat across the room, at times conversing languidly; often they were silent.

It was after this that Hammond pointedly noticed the curiously strained atmosphere that seemed now to infect the house like a miasma.

One evening he experienced his startling revelation.

Carton was not in the room. With the same air of being forced to it, the two were playing as usual. They came to the end; Ethel Carton turned a little on the bench and simultaneously young Burton moved his face to the side and their eyes met.

They seemed to hold each other by a sudden, potent spell. Hammond could see the boy's profile; he had a very fine face. The features were carved out definitely, with a delicacy that was almost extreme. The lips were sensitive; he was usually pale. There was a touch of severity about his face that contrasted with his youth.

They were looking at each other steadfastly. Neither moved. The watcher felt that in this instant they were wholly oblivious of him, unconscious of all save their own disarming emotions. The boy's eyes seemed to widen, to film with moisture, to glow. And into Ethel Carton's face there came a flush like the colour of a secret, almost shameful blossoming.

It was she who broke the enchantment. She sprang up—and saw Hammond looking at her. Her cheeks paled at once. She stood near the bench in an immobility that was nearly statuesque; Hammond dropped his eyes and a desperate fear that she would fail in her manifest effort to control herself made him clench his fingers together into tight fists.

But she spoke, a little hurriedly, yet nevertheless in a voice that was almost normal.

"Where's Harry?" she asked.

"Upstairs, I think," Hammond answered.

"Must see what he's about . . ." she murmured.

She hurried out of the room without looking at Burton.

Then Hammond understood that these two were, appallingly, in love.

III

THE knowledge startled him; it distressed him enormously, and at the same time it seemed unbelievable.

It came to him how little, after all, he knew of Ethel Carton—how little we really know of anyone. He had grown very fond of her, and grateful to her also, for she had given him an interest in life. That is, an interest in herself, and even in Carton, her ineffectual companion, and in the circumstances and affairs surrounding her hours. He felt that they were in sympathy, *en rapport*, sincerely friendly. And now she seemed to pass into a world that was walled off from his participation.

Yet, thinking about it that night, he began to excuse her. After all, he had always felt that there was an ardour beneath her reserve, and in young Burton she doubtless found those qualities

of courage and hope that aroused a strong response in her own courageous heart.

But what would be the end? He firmly believed there would be no end, no definite break, no disaster, after all. If she did not love Carton she was faithful to him, even compassionate of him, and if she held him in contempt, contempt itself is sometimes an emotion that binds like love.

But, as it happened, he was wrong in supposing himself outside the new developments.

The next morning, after Carton had left the house, Ethel came into the room where he was reading and took a chair near his own. He laid down his book and met her eyes.

She was frowning a little. Her face betrayed no weakness, seemed foreign to all soft emotions.

"I wanted to talk to you about last night," she said.

Hammond was surprised and at once uncomfortable. He was uncertain, too, whether he had taken the proper significance from her words.

"I was bored," he replied. "I'm glad you came in to talk to me."

She ignored the casual nature of his answer and satisfied his perplexity at once.

"I know that you saw!" she said.

He could discover no appropriate comment. She continued in an almost cold voice.

"I'm not going to do anything foolish. But I've learned some very startling things about myself."

"Were you so sure of yourself?" Hammond asked.

"I was—in a way. I felt that if Harry had disappointed me it was not his fault. I had no right to blame him—I should have foreseen. Perhaps, after all, I was too ambitious, I wanted more than he ever had to give. Well—I'm not going to destroy him now!"

There seemed nothing out of place in her words, no egotistic assumption. She took for granted Hammond's entire understanding, and he did understand, fully. It was as she said: if Carton had nothing to give her, save regrets, she was entirely necessary to him, however unworthy he might be of any sacrifice.

He simply nodded.

"I fell into this as if it were a trap," she confessed. "I was almost unconscious of that boy at first. And then I began to notice him. He made me uncomfortable. His very diffidence was disturbing, for that implied that he was conscious of *me*. And then, just a little at a time, he began to revive emotions I had forgotten—just by looking at me. Oh, you may not believe it of me, but I was terrified. I felt as if a new fate were hanging over my head. He made me see that we never get old enough to outlive all our dreams!"

She said the last sentence bitterly, like an accusation, and at the same time the knowledge of it flushed her cheeks as he had seen them flush the evening before; that flush transfigured her.

Hammond felt that she was beautiful, that hers was the rare soul, and then he comprehended the magnitude of her sacrifice. An ardour burned in her heart and there it had smouldered for years uneased by any corresponding flame in one whom she might have worthily loved. Illusion is persistent until disillusion comes; for her the illusion of love still persisted since no one had ever come before to burn out that passionate ardour within her. Yet Hammond did not pity her, for even then she seemed too strong for pity.

"I had no chance to avoid it," she said. "You know I would have done so. Yet, now that it's happened, I'm not ashamed. Understand, there's nothing between us, no acts. He hasn't spoken a caressing word to me, and if I can help it, he never will. Meanwhile—"

She shrugged her shoulders, a gesture of commingled resignation and despair. What was she to do? Certainly Hammond, a man living half in the entrance of death, could not counsel her.

She stood in the room, looking down upon her confidant, and in that mo-

ment there came to him a knowledge of his own futility that embittered him. Understanding so well, it seemed irrational that he could not help, was powerless to rearrange these lives, Ethel Carton's, her husband's, and the other's. He felt that he was bound to these people and in a subtle way responsible for them. But he said nothing, and he knew that he could only wait.

Then, after this, he began to observe Carton's suspicions.

This new factor rather altered the focus of his attention. Carton became more vital in his eyes, and in a degree, less negligible. He came closer to the man's humanity, closer to the secret impulses of Carton's heart. And he found it impossible to imagine what might happen to this man if Ethel were gone.

It was useless to assure himself that the fellow was no more than a flabby sentimentalist. Hammond was too imaginative to dismiss Carton's fate to terms of a formula.

However, there were no signs of an immediate catastrophe. Carton's suspicions were, indeed, a little irrational, for surely he was provided with little ground for them. Young Burton came as usual; they all talked together; the customary mechanical duets were performed together, but in no way did these two betray their secret wanting. If anything, Ethel Carton was cold to the boy—and it may have been this very coldness that aroused Carton's attention. If this were true, it was surprising that he had felt such a subtle change in the atmosphere. You did not think of him as a finely observant man.

Nevertheless, he was different. In the evenings Hammond would catch him looking at his wife and he appeared to be thinking about her, and cogitating upon his own relations to her in a way that had never been his habit before. His eyes, ordinarily vacant and ineffectual, were often expressive. Hammond observed meanings in them, and emotions.

Once, as they were sitting down to the dinner table and Burton, who was a guest that evening, passed close to Ethel and in passing brushed her dress with his shoulder, Hammond found Carton staring at his wife with widened eyes of real terror.

Suddenly he understood then that the man was truly terrified, that he foresaw a great disaster, that out of the welter of his half-emotions there had arisen a definite and overmastering one—the emotion of his own helplessness. Then Carton, too, was in love.

It was a passion that mingled ridiculous folly with an intensity fully as great as that which tortured the other one, young Burton. The boy's was less pathological, and burned in a clearer flame, and was repressed only through superficial necessity, but this man loved also, and he, too, found expression denied him. How was Carton to make love to his own wife? He was not wholly a fool, in spite of his failures. He knew that there was no rebirth of early dreams for him. He could only fear, and wait.

Upon Burton, the effect of this strained, static atmosphere was evident. Hammond could see a physical difference; he was more pale, he carried himself with a certain peculiar rigidity, and often he was inattentive during casual conversation.

He avoided Ethel Carton, her eyes, the sight of her face, her words, any nearness to her. His visits were less frequent and when he came he gradually grew restless and made an early departure.

Hammond often wondered why he persisted in coming there. Why didn't he stay away altogether? That would have been the solution of an impossible problem. But he seemed to lack the strength; he had the strength for repression, but not for entire renunciation.

But it was not reasonable to suppose that such a state of affairs could persist for long.

IV

In considering the events that followed Hammond could not fairly ac-

cuse Ethel Carton of a breach of faith. If she had changed her mind, she had good reason—and she was in no way bound to make him the confidant of her decisions.

But he was surprised when Carton came to him with his disclosures.

Carton, burdened down with his apparatus, usually went out in the morning and did not return earlier than the late afternoon. On this day he arrived before three o'clock.

Hammond was alone in the house. Ethel had been gone since morning.

He was in the sitting room, reading. He heard Carton's step below—there was even a distinctive quality in his step; it was too soft, too undecided. Then he heard Carton ascending the stairs. There he seemed to pause, and it was several minutes before he came softly through the corridor and entered the sitting-room.

Turning to greet him, Hammond was startled by his appearance. He looked positively dishevelled, although a closer scrutiny showed that his clothes were in fairly good order; his coat collar was turned under and his hair rumpled up, but no more. What really lent his whole figure the semblance of extraordinary disorder was the expression of his face, and the crumpled slouch of his body.

He looked beaten, he looked exhausted.

His eyes were like those of a whipped dog. His arms hung down in complete flexion; his knees were bent; it seemed impossible for him to stand erect.

Hammond's question arose spontaneously to his lips.

"What's the matter with you?" he asked.

The question, even the mere sound of a human voice, appeared to startle Carton, as if he had been unaware of the other man's presence. He turned his eyes on the invalid and for some seconds stared at him idiotically.

"Can I do anything?" Hammond asked.

Carton shook his head.

"Nobody can do anything . . ." he said.

These words, uttered in a tone of profound dejection, apparently brought him a measure of rationality. He crossed the room and sank into a chair.

"I think she's going to leave me," he said.

He assumed Hammond's knowledge, and so the latter took up his assumption, seeing no reason for pretence. He waited for him to continue.

"If she goes, I can't stop her," he went on. "I've no claim on her. I've disappointed her. She expected something of me—well, I failed. I know well enough I've failed, but I can't tell you why. Anyway, I've no claim over her. I can't do anything. . . ."

It was plain to Hammond that he wanted to talk, that to confess was better than the torment of his silent thoughts. And, perhaps by talking, despite his statement of disbelief, he hoped to see some light, a way out, a way to save himself. He was without shame in his weakness. He admitted his dependence upon Ethel Carton utterly.

The incidents of his story were only dramatic when considered in the light of that other drama, the actless drama of emotions played out between these three. In the city he had encountered the two together. They were walking arm in arm; Burton was leaning close to his wife and she looking up into his face, smiling.

It was her smile that unnerved Carton, that betrayed her entirely, that left no straw of hopeful doubt. It was a smile that he remembered, coming back to him through the fog of gray years: in this way she had once smiled at him!

Then the three encountered each other, face to face.

Ethel and her lover were caught as if trapped, and neither had the aplomb to drive the startled looks from their faces.

They all paused, there on the pavement, staring at each other. Burton was the first to recover; he took off

his hat and bowed. The woman made no gesture of recognition.

"She looked at me with her face as white as snow," Carton said, "and her eyes were very cold."

Then Burton took her arm again, said something or other that Carton did not hear, and the two went on together, leaving Carton behind them like a derelict.

It was useless for Hammond, the confession completed, to offer any palliative remarks. He understood the full significance of that meeting, however slight it might have been in actual incident, and he knew that the man before him comprehended also.

After Carton left he gave himself up to surprised reflections. Then they were seeing each other in secret! Ethel had failed in her determination! It must have begun recently, for he recalled all their meetings in the house and could remember nothing but the strain of their repression. Perhaps that very day was the first one of their meeting, their first compromise—and already disastrous.

Ethel came home late in the afternoon and complained of being ill. She went directly to her room, and did not appear for dinner, which was attended by Carton and Hammond, eating together in silence.

Evidently she found herself unequal to the task of sitting down with them and pretending that nothing had happened—and, on the other hand, unequal to a crisis, to a straightforward facing of the situation, and an understanding.

The more Hammond thought about it, the less possibility of an understanding he could see. It worried him excessively. He was rather a simple-minded man, lacking the cynicism to dismiss the whole matter and let it take its course without his concern. And, also, he liked these people. He felt a sincere affection for Ethel Carton, and however detached might have been his viewpoint in considering the general fatality of mankind, this specific situation touched his heart intimately.

In the morning Carton left as usual, without seeing his wife. She still remained in her room.

It was late in the morning and Hammond was downstairs, when she descended and confronted him.

He saw that she was dressed to go out. She wore a brown suit, in which her figure looked slender and restrained; her face was covered by a veil and beneath this her eyes looked out coldly. She had a travelling bag in her hand. It was this that startled Hammond.

"I came in here to say good-bye—for a while," she said.

Her voice was very steady. Hammond looked up at her gravely.

"Good-bye?" he questioned.

For the first time in their relationship Ethel Carton, under the strain of her determination, showed petulance.

"Oh, don't look at me so solemnly!" she exclaimed. "You don't mean to tell me now that you *also* have a claim on my life?"

She stared at him angrily for a moment and then, her shoulders drooping a little, she crossed the room swiftly and placed her hand on his arm.

"Forgive me, dear friend," she said. "I'm horribly upset. I couldn't make up my mind until early this morning—although I promised Arthur yesterday. I don't know which would have taken the most strength, to stay or to go. At any rate—I'm going."

Hammond looked up into her tense face.

"When will we see each other again?" he asked, quietly.

She laughed a little, with a touch of hysteria.

"I don't know what Arthur's plans are," she said. "Think of it! For the first time since I was a little girl I have someone else to make plans for me, someone else to arrange affairs for me . . ."

Her voice became a trifle defiant, as if, in explaining the luxury of dependence, she justified herself in her purpose. But obviously this carried very little real weight in the councils of her determination. She was too used to

self-reliance to find anything peculiarly attractive in dependence. What was taking her away was love, the insanity of romance, the madness of awakened dreams.

Softening again, she sat down near Hammond and touched his arm with her gloved hand. She began to speak of herself and the boy. She told him that she could not foresee their future.

"For the first time in years," she said, "I'm able to repress all thought of what may happen to me, to anyone. I'm ready to live just for this instant!"

As she continued to speak to him, Hammond heard less and less the words she said, for he was thinking of Carton. After all, in spite of his seeming negligibility, Carton was the unaccountable factor in this situation. It was impossible to predict what he might do, and how the break would affect him. He was suddenly a figure of importance, full of potentialities. He might react in any way, in a hundred startling ways.

And it was whilst he nursed these thoughts that Carton himself appeared.

He must have come back under the urge of a premonition that was not to be denied its actual evidence. He entered softly, and the two saw him standing in the door, looking into the room.

He ignored Hammond's presence. His eyes were fastened only on his wife. They passed over her person; they dwelt a second on the leather bag standing in the centre of the room. And then—as if from the effect of a diabolic discovery—there spread over his face an expression of profound terror.

His cheeks whitened, his lips parted, and his eyes opened widely. He stared at his wife. There was no pleading in his face, but fright only, real terror. He was perfectly motionless. One hand cleanched the edge of his rumpled coat.

Ethel Carton arose.

For some seconds these two faced each other.

Carton's expression did not change, and he seemed incapable of speech.

Hammond saw the woman's cheeks flush and a moment later he was astonished to see her turn and go over abruptly to the little table at the side of the room. She raised her hands and pulled the pins out of her hat. She took her hat off and laid it on the table, she began to pull at the fingers of her gloves.

Very unexpectedly Carton spoke.

"What are you doing that for?" he asked.

To Hammond's ears his voice sounded extraordinarily *natural!* The tenseness of the situation had affected the invalid profoundly. He expected anything but the ordinary from the actors in this drama; it seemed to him that everything should have changed in keeping with their actions—even the colour of their voices.

"Because I'm going to stay!" she replied.

For just a second, as these words came to his ears, Carton was motionless. Then he took a forward step. His face was shining—with hope! An astounding, appalling expectancy possessed his features, transfiguring them. He looked at Ethel Carton and his repressed adoration leapt into his face shamelessly, like a betrayal.

Perhaps she saw, but she gave him no response. After all, as Hammond reasoned, she was now too disillusioned for response. She had discovered the illusion of love with another man; she could not accept it now with Carton. Whatever his power over her—and it was strong enough to bring about this supreme denial of her new dreams—he could not expect that.

For a second or two she stood there by the little table, as if, after taking that decision, she swiftly reflected upon her reasons for it. No doubt she explained it to herself in many ways, in terms of her pity, her memories, her past hopes, her forgotten dreams. Whatever emotions within the obscure depths of her heart had stayed her purpose she knew this to be true: having given so much of her life to this man,

in the last instant she found it impossible not to give more.

She turned abruptly, picked up the leather bag, and almost as if she did not see Carton, as if, although making her renunciation for him he was too negligible for her thought, she brushed by him out into the hall.

Hammond heard her ascending the stairs to her room.

Carton stepped into the room, dropped into a chair, and stared down at the carpet. He was trembling a little. The betraying expression of hope had vanished from his face.

PATRON SAINTS

By Hortense Flexner

UPON my littered desk they stand,
Lincoln in bronze, Jeanne d'Arc in gray,
Neighbours most strangely by my hand,
Dear patron saints, mad worlds away,

The bleak worn man, the earnest girl,
I wonder what they might have said
Across the bridge of mist and pearl—
Young Trust-in-Dreams and Bending-Head.

But who shall tell, for these have known
High dreams and flaming swords, the pride
Of battles won— and last, alone,
The paltry men for whom they died.

I AM LONESOME

By June Gibson

I AM lonesome.

* * * * *

When I am bad, people pass me without recognition on the Avenue.
When I am good, they yawn and find a pretext for leaving me.
When I am clever, they eye me suspiciously and linger but briefly.
When I am modest and shy, they deem me stupid and depart.

* * * * *

I am lonesome.

NICE girl: One who likes you.

MEN I HAVE PROPOSED TO

By June Gibson

I

Maurice

HE was tall and broad, with smooth blond hair and eyes that were the deep blue of wood violets. He was faultless of grooming. When he entered the room, the eyes of the women narrowed like buttercup blooms at sundown. Like contestants in a race, each endeavoured to be the first to reach his side. They hovered about him as bees hover about the honeysuckle blossoms—stinging one another. They flattered him, laughing when he laughed; his words seemed to be their nourishment.

I decided to make Maurice propose to me.

When we were presented, I yawned slightly and moved toward the terrace.

II

Claudius

HE was a professor of zoölogy. An acquaintance brought him to tea. He was staid and stolid, and as ugly as the ruins of a building after a fire. Among my guests were many lovely women. He was as eager to win their favour as a dog, scenting a rabbit, is keen to be loosed from his leash. He knew nothing of small talk; his manners were crude; I saw that he was boring them almost to distraction. I moved toward him. I was the most beautiful woman in the room.

"Tell me something of your work," I said.

He talked for an hour, in a monotonous drone.

". . . So why vituperate the tockay? The tody is an insectivorous bird. . . ."

As he spoke he trembled like a footbridge over which a runaway horse gallops; his eyes devoured my beauty as candelabra eat up the gloom.

I decided to make Claudius propose to me.

I ran my slim finger through a wisp of hair that curled over his left ear.

III

Reginald

I HEARD a roué airing his views.

"When I marry," he said, "my wife and I must be in perfect accord. My habits are formed, and I enjoy my vices. Her experience must match mine. Nicotine and liqueurs must not be unknown to her."

I agreed with him and told him I always smoked with the men I knew; he invited me to try one of his bronze-tipped cigarettes that had been sent from Rome. As he struck a match, I recalled the innumerable times I had huddled in my hall, the scent of Benedictine on my lips, until the servants came; of the continuous train of cigarettes I had smoked, lighting one from the other, until my doctor warned me; of my lovers. . . .

I decided to make Reginald propose to me.

Gazing innocently at him with my eyes widened like a child's, I stuck the cigarette in the centre of my lips, plunging the bronze tip into the little match flame.

IV

No. 687

An institution for the insane adjoined our estate. One day, out of curiosity, I scaled the wall and peered over into the asylum garden. One of the inmates was pacing up and down a mignonette-fringed walk. I spoke to him, but he ignored me. This annoyed me. I am very beautiful, with eyes as green as the deep sea; I have the grace of smoke issuing from a narrow chimney. Men do not usually scorn me.

Each day I scaled the wall and watched No. 687 as he wandered through the garden, sad-visaged, lugubrious sighs escaping him. One day I questioned a warden. . . .

I decided to make No. 687 propose to me.

That evening, when the moon had climbed to the top of the sky, I appeared on the garden wall. In my slender hand I held a fragrant, full-brown rose. Below me strolled No. 687, gazing amorously at the moon.

"Romeo!" I called softly.

V

Silas

Faint shadows, the colour of the hills at twilight, lay below my eyes, so I summered at a farm-house in the country where there was plenty of fresh white milk and creamy yellow butter. In the fields was a tall lad, with cheeks swarthy and bronze, and hair the colour of moonless night. I loved to watch him as he pitched the golden hay; his was the litheness of a doe jumping across a creek. One day I carried his lunch to him in a shining pail that tinkled at contact with my long string of amber beads that swayed as I swung across the meadow. We sat together beneath a hayrick and talked. Through the trees we saw a young farm-girl in a gingham gown.

"I am saving all my love for her," he said shyly. "We planned to marry when we were little children. I do not flit from one to another. The Loreleis of big cities do not charm me." The tint of sunsets surged to his cheeks. "I have never kissed a woman."

As I pressed my soft, fragrant lips against his, his awkward smack filled me with desire for mirth.

I decided to make Silas propose to me.

"Si, you devil!" I ejaculated wryly. "And you said you weren't experienced! Oh—you men!"

VI

Isaac

I am as beautiful as a desert sunset. My gowns are as sheer and clinging as the webs that fat spiders weave in the wistaria vines. My joy lies in exquisite gowning. I never tire of draping pale shades of mauve and lilac and lemon about my slim figure. My fans of long, curling ostrich feathers delight me; my jewels are chosen to harmonize with my gowns.

But most important of all is my fragrance. I affect an Egyptian perfume. The dizzying redolence of Nile queens follows my presence like the gulls that follow the boats in San Francisco Bay. My fragrance is more famous than Pisa's Leaning Tower. When I arrived from Paris, all were eager to meet me. Women yearned to learn the name of my entrancing perfume; perfumers begged me for its formula.

Among those that thronged about me was the man they told me was going to be the richest man in America. My friends explained to me about him, how he was amassing his great wealth, and we laughed because he looked as if he desired to throttle me. When we were presented, I said:

"I am giving a reception to-morrow, Mr. Solomon. Will it please you to attend?"

He muttered a surly acquiescence and left, glowering.

I decided to make Isaac propose to me.

Isaac Solomon came to my reception. Across the room I saw him watching me, hate in his eyes. Reporters circled about me like vultures; famous per-

fumers, beseeching me for the secret of my famous scenting, sounded like a jazz band.

"It smells more wonderful than ever to-day," they marvelled.

I dismissed them all, and moved toward Isaac Solomon. As I approached, his fat face beamed. . . .

From the folds of my gown arose the blatant odour of "Solomon's Sweet-Stuff Perfume."

VII

Ralph

RALPH was a clerk in Senator Oliphant's office. He was drab and anæmic, with thin yellow hair, bowed legs, and a quivering chin. His movements resembled those of a bird hopping among bread crumbs. He trembled at sudden noises and blushed when spoken to. And he worshipped Senator Oliphant more than he did his Maker. Even abuse from the Senator was sweeter than days before the Eighteenth Amendment. He considered Senator Oliphant the greatest man that ever lived; Ralph would gladly have burned at the stake to have saved him from getting his boots muddy.

I had business with the Senator. The day before I was to call at his office I saw him on the street. Ralph was with him. The dumb devotion of Ralph was like that of the lion from whose foot the youth Androcles drew the thorn.

I decided to make Ralph propose to me.

The next day I entered the Senator's office. Ralph, trembling and stuttering, came toward me. I held out my hand to him and smiled with the radiance of a June midday.

"Good-morning, Senator," I said. "I do hope you'll forgive me for being late."

VIII

Oliver

OLIVER had never been ill a day in his life. The taste of tonics was unknown to him. He could walk twenty miles without tiring. If there was anything heavy to be lifted, Oliver was always called for. If someone must journey through a snowstorm for a doctor, it was Oliver who went, because Oliver never caught cold. No one ever discussed disease or operation with Oliver, because disease and operation were as unknown to his experiences as matches to gunpowder. Everyone envied him his splendid good health. They would pat him on the back and say:

"Never been sick a day in your life, have you, Ollie?"

Oliver called. He was as healthy-looking as a prize fighter primed for a bout. As he entered, it was as if a fresh gust of wind were sweeping through the room.

"Never been sick a day in my life," he boasted. . . .

I decided to make Oliver propose to me.

I eyed him anxiously. "You seem a little pale to-day, a bit fatigued." I arose to place pillows behind him, to poke the fire, and ordered a servant to bring him something in a glass. "Are you sure you feel quite well?"

IX

No. 912

I WAS interested in prison reform. Each day I would go to the penitentiary with a committee of women and write down tiresome statistics in a notebook. The hard, ugly faces of the prisoners offended me; the musty cells chilled my body. I wondered if there was one interesting man confined within the gray walls.

One day I noticed a handsome prisoner gazing at me through narrow eyes the colour of orange pekoe. I moved toward him.

"You are like a woodland animal that has been caged," I said.

"For two years not a ray of light has drifted through the bars of my cell," he said. "But, lady, since you've been coming, the whole prison's flooded with sunshine. I feel that you will understand. Oh, lady, they say I'm a crook. I swear it's false. I'm an honest man.

Remember Dreyfus and what they did to him," he whined.

While he talked he deftly removed the diamond brooch from my gown.

I decided to make No. 912 propose to me.

"Say, kid," I whispered. "I'm in the game myself. I just snitched that brooch from one of the dames I came with. When do you get out?"

X

Chauncey

CHAUNCEY was a Methodist minister. His eyes were as expressionless as a faded photograph; his nose was long and pinched; his lips were thin. A smile on his face was as frequent as a Jewish membership in the Knights of Columbus. He called each day on his parishioners and spoke graphically of the torments of hell.

He came to see me one morning before I had dressed. I was curled up on a drawing-room divan like a Persian kitten, nibbling toast as I read something of Gautier. As he slunk into my presence, I emitted a soprano shriek and sped behind a curtain.

"Mr. de Lancey," I gasped, "I am in negligée!"

"Do not fear, dear sister," he said hollowly. "I am a minister of the Gospel. . . ."

I decided to make Chauncey propose to me.

"You are a man," I said.

CONFESSION

By David Morton

THERE have been times—this that you never knew—
When I have kept, unuttered, in my heart,
A strange, cold dread that clings and clings to you:
Not to your soul immortal, not that part
That lingers, somehow, and eludes the grave,
A chill and naked comfort after death;
In this, the great find solace, and the brave
Have faith that goes beyond the fickle breath;

But I am not of these; a needy fear
Wants every intimate gesture that it knew:
Lift of your head, sound of your breathing near,
That way you turn your shoulder,—these are You,
O briefest Sweet, how should your soul replace
That warm, bronze line that melts above your face?

CONSCIENCE is the ghost of a maiden aunt.

CORINNA AND HER MAN

By Thyra Samter Winslow

I

CORINNA had always objected to her mother's attitude toward her father—to the attitude of other women she knew toward their husbands. She spoke frequently to her mother about it, even when she was a young girl.

"Ma," she had said, "I don't see why you slave so over Pa. Your whole life is made up of worrying over him and about him. He doesn't pay any attention except to sort of expect it and take it for granted. You spend hours getting dinner and having it on the table, hot, the minute he gets home. He never notices, unless something goes wrong. He just eats. You're always picking out things he likes or that are good for him, and having those instead of what *you* like. First thing in the morning you scurry around the kitchen and make me help, getting breakfast, and you hurry home afternoons to get dinner. You don't dare to ask people to the house evenings, like Miss Herron, if he doesn't like them. You treat him so carefully, always trying not to worry him or annoy him—always telling me 'your Pa won't like that,' when I do things. I wouldn't live like you, you bet."

Mrs. Ferguson was a nervous, round little woman, full of quick, meaningless little movements. She had a large, rather flat face, full of small but not disfiguring wrinkles. She had always smiled, patiently, at Corinna.

"You don't know your Pa," she'd say, "or men. Men have got to be waited on, got to be treated right. Wait until you're grown up and married—you'll find out. Men have got to have their meals on time and got to have the house the way they want it, neat if they are neat, full of people if they like things lively. You don't know men."

"Huh," Corinna had sneered, "you bet I'll never make a slave of myself for any man. If I ever marry, the man'll do what *I* want. I shan't be always worrying for fear I'm doing the wrong thing."

Yet, looking among her mother's acquaintances and at the parents of her own friends, she noticed the existence of this same state of affairs that so annoyed her in her own family. The man was always being catered to. When he was at home, if at no other time, the house had to move along with an outward smoothness. Little unpleasant things were hidden away. All of the plans of the household were for amusing, entertaining, the man. If he liked to play cards, the cards were brought out immediately after dinner and one game followed another. The man could quarrel with the plays of the others, if he wanted to, grumble at his own ill-luck, at the playing of his partners—it was all accepted with an assumed merriment as a part of life. If the man liked to read, his chair, the most comfortable in the house, was drawn up before the best light, and the children, when there were children, had to talk quietly so as not to disturb him.

"The man, the man, always the man," thought Corinna. "Just because he brings home the money. The women pretend to joke about being home on time, about slaving for him, but they do it just the same. You bet when I'm married things won't be like that. This

is a newer generation. It's about time to quit worshipping the man, making such a fuss over him, slaving for him."

Corinna, who was, in her way, thoughtful, somewhat of a philosopher, worried a little over it. She didn't like to think that, in each household, one person—the male head of the house—should govern things so thoroughly, blindly. She didn't believe especially in woman's suffrage, she wasn't interested in voting, she knew women couldn't invent things—at least she knew *she* couldn't; she wasn't interested in science or art, things like that. She just didn't like the idea of being subservient to—cowed by—a man. Why—she knew men.

In spite of her mother, she realized that men weren't superior people, after all. They were rather more stupid than women on the whole, a bit heavy, with a thick sense of humour. Men were ashamed to show emotions, easy victims to flattery. Of course they were all right to marry. A girl ought to marry. An old maid sort of admits that she can't get a man. Being married gives one a sense of being somebody. Marriage was all right—only married women ought to learn—oughtn't to be such fools, making themselves servants and slaves and an admiring audience, all in one. She wouldn't.

II

Because Corinna's parents were poor, when she finished high school, at eighteen, she knew she had to do something to support herself until such time as marriage should relieve her of the necessity of buying her own clothes and helping at home. She felt that schoolteaching required too much training—would be tiresome—and, besides, most teachers became old maids in the end. She did not want to go into a store. She had no special talent or ambition. So she went to a business college and, after eight months—she was not very clever or quick in learning word-signs—she was able to take a business letter with fair rapidity and transcribe it with some degree of accuracy on the typewriter.

She liked the profession of stenographer. It was decent, dressy. She even looked ahead to becoming someone's private secretary, wearing good clothes and sweeping in, half an hour later than the other stenographers, to an office marked "private," being consulted on numerous business problems—saving the firm money by her wisdom—and maybe marrying the boss in the end.

Her first position lasted two months, her next three. Then she got with a wholesale hardware concern and took dictation a bit more rapidly from the stove buyer, a married man who had four children and who was always worrying about catching cold. She settled down, fairly comfortably, making enough money to wear nice clothes, arriving at the office always a bit late in the morning, always anxious to leave a little before five at night, wasting too much time at noon or in the cloakroom gossiping with the other girls, but, on the whole, as good as the firm expected of her.

Corinna's evenings were spent at dances or the theatres or going to bed at seven to make up for lost sleep. She accepted invitations from anyone who asked her—men she met at the office or through girls, old school acquaintances. She didn't care particularly for any of them, but wanted to be with men, especially those who wore good clothes and knew how to treat a girl. She was lively and vivacious, rather a pretty girl in a light, indistinct way, with a nice mouth and a pretty little nose.

This smoothness of days at the office, and of evenings having a good time, continued until Corinna was twenty. Then she fell in love.

She had been waiting, poised, to fall in love for a long time. She had been eagerly looking for love, watching every man she met with a kind of painful eagerness, ready to yield affection at the first opportunity. She met the fellow at a semi-public dance, where she was taken by a boy she had met at business college. The man she fell in love

with was named Rodney Cantwell and her escort had known him and had introduced them.

All night, after that first meeting, the name "Rodney, Rodney," went through her mind. Rodney Cantwell! He was quite wonderful, all that a man one loved ought to be. He was tall, with light, rather rough hair, which he brushed back from his forehead in an uneven sweep. His eyes seemed a mysterious blue-gray. He held them half-closed, squinting when he laughed. He danced better than anyone Corinna had ever danced with. He asked her to go to a dance with him the following week.

All week Corinna lived in a sort of delirium. She borrowed money from her mother and bought a new evening dress of flimsy pink silk, with no wearing qualities—Corinna usually was rather careful to get durable things. She thought of nothing but Rodney, to the detriment of her dictation and the stove-buyer's temper.

On Saturday night, when Rodney called, she met him with a delicious lump of expectancy in her throat. She learned, suddenly, without experience, a new coquetry. Before this, she had been, with the boys and young men she knew, more or less natural, as natural, that is, as girls ever are with men. There had been a sort of decent companionship. Suddenly, this was changed.

On the way to the dance she found herself talking with a new piquancy, hinting at adventures she had never had, admirers she had never known, a life that was non-existent. She tried to make herself valuable, desirable. She became playful, indifferent. At the dance the music seemed especially fascinating. She hardly spoke to the few people she knew there, preferring to dance every dance with Rodney, letting herself lie, hardly conscious, in his arms as she danced.

At the door of her apartment, as he took her home, he put his arms around her and kissed her. Other men had kissed her, but only after much playful fencing, long acquaintanceship. Now, she yielded to Rodney's kisses in a way she had never done. After he had left her, she lay awake most of the night and spent the rest of it, and all of Sunday morning, dreaming of him.

III

MARRIED to Rodney! That would be life! Not the slavery of her mother. Married to Rodney, life would have, constantly, a new meaning. She could coquette with life, play with life—living became suddenly sparkling, many coloured.

Before this, she had not asked for romance, she had never dreamed of even this much romance. She had just asked that she become not like her mother, a slave to a man who cared nothing for her, for whom she cared nothing. Her mother did not love her father. Other women she knew did not love their husbands. She saw that, now. They tolerated them, because they were being supported. They slaved for them because the men wanted slaves. Married to Rodney—love, a full flowering of love—

Rodney did not telephone her for two weeks. She thought of him every day, more than she had ever thought of one person—one thing—in all of her life before. Rodney—she saw his light, thick, rather rough hair, felt his cheek against hers. She thought of him every night after she had got into bed, picturing him in the dark, imagining herself kissing him and being kissed over and over again.

Then, just as she was bewilderingly accepting the fact that perhaps, after all, he did not care for her, Rodney telephoned her and asked her to go to another dance with him—no excuse, no discussion of his two weeks of silence. She accepted eagerly—and bought another new dress, a thin white one, this time. She must look charming.

The second dance was like the first. Her heart sang when she was with him. She was astonished at herself, at her emotions. She had not thought her-

self capable of such things. She sneered at her mother, even as she felt sorry for her. What did her mother—the other women she knew—know about such feelings—about men like Rodney? They had never even met men like Rodney.

For three weeks, then, Rodney took her to a dance every Saturday night. On a Wednesday he took her to the theatre. And, after each outing there were kisses in the front hall of the apartment. Finally he asked her so:nething—but it was not to marry him.

Corinna was surprised. Then she was furious at Rodney for misunderstanding her, at herself for not being able to yield to him. She went over all of the old platitudes of respectability—what kind of a girl did he think she was?—had she led him to think, by word or action, that she would dream of such a thing—how dared he talk to her—even think of her like that?

And Rodney, with a stubborn sort of persistency went over his list of platitudes, too. After all—what harm was there? He liked her all right—would take care of her—she knew that—he would marry her if he could—surely she knew—had known from the first—that he wasn't the marrying kind. She had kissed him, hadn't she—encouraged him—led him on? Other girls . . .

Corinna did not see Rodney any more. He never telephoned her again. She knew where she could reach him, knew where he was employed. But what was there to say to him? She was properly bound with all of the virtues of her class. Kisses were all right. Coquetries were all right. Why, she had even definitely decided to marry Rodney. Of course, her low-cut evening dresses, her little tricks—pressing against him with her bare shoulder, of kissing him, of touching his face with her fingers—these were proper as long as they were baits to matrimony. They were decent then, legitimate. But Rodney had "insulted" her. He had misunderstood her.

As time passed, she definitely decided that she had been mistaken in him, that Rodney had, from the first, been unprincipled, unworthy of her company, that he had led her on, tried to get the best of her, but that, at the first hint of his true feelings toward her, she had sent him from her in great and righteous wrath. She had had a lucky escape.

For months, then, she longed to see Rodney, but she knew what seeing him would mean. She wanted only matrimony. It was respectable, decent, the right thing—to be married. . . . But now it was unthinkable that she should even consider Rodney.

Life became dull-coloured, tinted only by the thought of what she had been through, of her escape—a fascinating, secret thing. She went to dances with the men she had known before, tried to look especially nice, in case Rodney should see her. She carried with her, though, from that time, some of the coquetry that being in love with Rodney had given her. She found that, even though it was artificial now, it added to her popularity.

IV

A YEAR later she fell in love again, a faint echo of what she had felt for Rodney. He was blond, too, but in a faded way, just as her love for him was faded. There were some visits to the theatre—Fred didn't care for dancing—a few parties, his salary was small. Then she found that Fred, too, had definite ideas against matrimony—would not marry until his income was almost twice its present size.

Corinna knew the type—you go with them and go with them for years and years, and become middle-aged; finally, after everyone you know is settled, you either separate and remain single or lapse almost unconsciously into matrimony. Not if she knew herself!

Of course, she wouldn't be Fred's slave if she married him. She knew that. But—waiting years and years and then maybe his changing his mind

or his salary never growing after all—. It was not what you'd call a real opportunity. Corinna's pale love for Fred faded out altogether. She broke an engagement or two, failed to keep a telephone appointment—was surprised to see how little she missed him.

Matrimonial chances did not come in great numbers to Corinna. In fact, during the next two years she did not have a single proposal of marriage nor any chance that might have been twisted into a proposal. Men took her to the theatre or to dances—she was an excellent dancer—told her their troubles, allowed her to be pleasantly entertaining. She coquetted and flirted and giggled—talked to the girls she knew about what a wonderful time she was having and how popular she was. One at a time the other girls she knew married and went to housekeeping in little apartments. She was twenty-four. It worried her, definitely, now, not being married.

Then Arthur Slossen came to work at the woollen factory where Corinna was now employed—she had left the hardware concern several years before and took dictation now from a grandfatherly old fellow who suffered with asthma. Arthur Slossen was not handsome. Corinna had no illusions about that. He was insignificant-looking, rather retiring and had a slight accent, showing unmistakably that he was foreign-born, a stigma in the set in which Corinna moved.

But, because he was a man and new, Corinna smiled at him and coquetted. She was not surprised when he asked her, three weeks after he entered the office, to go to the theatre with him. He was as unattractive as any man Corinna had ever known. He lacked, alike, all vices and virtues that would have made for interest. He was gentle, even gentlemanly. He was fairly well educated, but, outside of reading the newspapers morning and evening, he had no interest in the printed word. From his evening newspaper he cut out the sermons written by a well-known minister and read from them aloud occasionally. He was kindly and meant well by everyone. Altogether, Corinna found him as boring as possible.

But, because he was a man and an escort, Corinna smiled at him, made eyes at him, went through her whole repertoire of tricks. Almost mechanically she led him on, as she had tried to lead on other men before him.

One night, after she had "gone with" him for about six months, he asked her to marry him. The proposal came almost as a surprise to Corinna. Of course she had definitely played for a proposal—yet she had always played for proposals and had never received them. And here was Arthur Slossen—less of a catch than any man she had ever known—and he had asked her to marry him. To be sure there was really nothing definitely the matter with him. He was fairly nice-looking. He was a little stoop-shouldered, a little indefinite. He had a foreign accent and rather an embarrassed, humble way. But he was really quite all right. As attractive as her father must have been, or her Uncle Will. After all—a husband. . . . She could stop work in the office—she had never become a real private secretary, after all, and her bosses were always married and paid no attention to her. If she hadn't any chances until now, she wasn't likely to have any after twenty-five—twenty-five is getting on—her complexion wasn't as good as it used to be, her face was becoming broader, flatter, like her mother's.

V

CORINNA and Arthur were married in June, and Corinna's friends spoke sentimentally about "the month of brides" and gave her a kitchen shower. The couple went to housekeeping in a four-room apartment and Corinna started in to learn how to cook—she'd never paid much attention to kitchen arts before, being in school, first, and later busy all day in the office.

Corinna now had more time to notice Arthur. And when she looked at

him—and looked at the husbands of the other girls she knew—he seemed as desirable as any of them. He had a foreign accent and rounded shoulders and no sparkle or style—but what were those others? They had other faults just as glaring. But Corinna was glad that at least her generation did not become slaves of their husbands. And, as she rejoiced in this, she presently made a new discovery; she found that she actually despised Arthur. And, despising him, she watched her girl friends, talked with them, and found that all of the other young married women she knew despised their husbands, too.

She knew, too, why she despised Arthur. It was because of his meekness and his stupidity, his lack of life and excitement—because, in marrying him, he had definitely killed any chances of a romantic marriage that might, some day, have come to her. But, more than that. Corinna knew that she despised him—and that other women despised *their* husbands—*because she had been able to marry him.* All other men she had known—Rodney and Fred and the others, a man named Phillips, and one named Billy Freer and Jim Henderson—they had, in one way or another, managed to escape her. They had been cleverer than she—and avoided matrimony altogether, or at least with her. It had been a duel, her wits and tricks against theirs—and they had won. Only Arthur had lost, simple Arthur, too stupid to get away. So she despised him because he had allowed himself to be caught—and to be caught by her tricks—old tricks, worn-out tricks, tricks at twenty-five, tricks that had failed to ensnare the others.

Life settled down, monotonously. Because she despised Arthur, Corinna was able to disregard him almost entirely. She would spend whole days, slovenly, in a soiled negligée, washing her face carelessly half an hour before he came home, or allowing it to remain daubed with cold cream, serving delicatessen dinners or cold meats and beans. She had no scruples about cheating him. She was true to him because no pleasant opportunities presented themselves.

Finally, bored at staying home so much, she met men she knew downtown and had luncheon with them or went to the matinée. She even flirted with good-looking men on the street or in hotel lobbies and then had tea. The men were not very interesting nor were the flirtations very exciting—the most desirable men wouldn't notice her and those who did got awfully "fresh"—but it was better than nothing. What if Arthur *did* find out? What could he do? Kick her out? She'd like to see him. What if he did? She hadn't done anything actually bad. She was a married woman, had "Mrs." in front of her name. It wasn't as if she were a poor worm, like her mother had been. She was a good stenographer, could get a position any day, she knew that. Of course it was easier, spending her days in negligée reading magazines or eating candy, or downtown shopping or flirting. It was a lot better, more comfortable, than working. But, if the worst came to the worst, it wouldn't be so awfully bad if she left Arthur. It wasn't as if she couldn't get along. Poor old Arthur—he ought to be glad he had her—who was he to be considered, anyhow?

She thought of Rodney. His proposal no longer seemed insulting now. She remembered Rodney—his wonderful rough blond hair, his narrow gray eyes, his kisses. She was no longer a young girl with a necessary virtue. She was a married woman now, a woman of the world, not a silly little working girl. If she wanted a little affair. . . .

She tried to reach Rodney over the telephone. He had left that position years before. No one there knew where he was. She sent a note to him, addressed to his former home. It was returned to her. Of course, she'd meet him on the street some day. In the meantime. . . .

She spent as much money as she could on clothes, as little as possible on

the household. Arthur was pretty good about money. He was getting ahead, too. He had two raises the first year of their marriage. Wouldn't it be wonderful if, after all, he made good? She had never thought of that possibility, of his making money. He had been a pitiful little way out—a way out of working and the stigma of being unmarried. What if he became something—improved?

VI

When they had been married a year and a half Arthur was promoted to assistant buyer in his department with quite a definite raise in salary. Then, suddenly, for the first time since her marriage, Corinna stopped despising him. He became almost important, someone to notice, to pay attention to. He could and did give her small luxuries far beyond those she would have been able to earn had she still been employed.

Almost unconsciously he took up more of her time. They could not afford a servant, although they were living in a more pretentious apartment—and Arthur, after a long day in the office, often came home tired, out of sorts. He needed cheering up, entertaining. His digestion was not good and he complained of "delicatessen slops," so that Corinna was forced to cook a regular dinner in the evening. She did it a bit grudgingly, but she was a little afraid of Arthur when he complained or when he quarrelled with her. After all, it was his money that was used to run the house—he deserved a little something from it. . . .

A few months later Corinna's father died and her mother gave up her own small apartment and came to live with Corinna. Arthur liked his mother-in-law, in an indefinite sort of way, and agreed to the arrangement without a word. But, sometimes after that, when matters of money for the household came up, he sometimes dared to assert himself, mentioning that, after all, as long as he was paying for the running of the household and was supporting, unaided, both Corinna and her mother, perhaps his opinions might be listened to and his desires fulfilled.

The next year Corinna's daughter was born. Corinna did not especially want a baby. Still, all of her friends were having them. . . . When she knew the baby was coming, she yielded herself deliberately to having it, spending more months than necessary in the house in negligée, ashamed to go on the street on account of her figure. She lay on the couch then, ate huge amounts of chocolates and read sentimental stories in the magazines. After the baby came she did not regain her figure, but retained some of the plumpness which characterized her mother.

There was a maid, now, an ill-trained, slow girl, but, even so, Corinna did not resume the pursuits of her early married life. There were fewer teas with men acquaintances. Perhaps because she was heavier and less entertaining, perhaps because the baby took up much of her time, perhaps because her mother and Arthur seemed to question her more, there seemed fewer chances for "fun." She associated more with women and talked babies and servants and played bridge. At the end of two years another baby came, Arthur, junior, and before another two years had passed, Corinna's third child, Archie, was born.

Corinna was definitely middle-aged, now, although she felt that she was still young and didn't look her age, nearly. She spent her time with the children mostly, for even with the help of her mother and the one maid, the children were always falling down or crying or needing attention.

There was always a lot to do. When she went downtown, it was usually, definitely, on a shopping trip, with a list of things in her purse that had to be looked after. She wore rather expensive things, a bit flashy, too full of ornament, not very carefully made, sometimes torn where one of the children had pulled, but quite "in style" as to the cut of the skirt and the colour.

Arthur did very well in business. When Beatrice, the oldest child, was twelve, he became buyer of his department. With the years, Arthur had changed a little, too. He was a nervous fellow and, when he was home, he insisted that the children be kept quiet. He was on rather a strict diet, which precluded most good things to eat and did not help his disposition. But he retained his quiet habits and his love of home and did not develop any new desires outside of his business ambitions.

VII

It was when Beatrice was thirteen that she said something which surprised Corinna.

"Mother," she said, "when I get grown up and married, you bet I'm not going to be a slave to a husband, the way you are to Dad."

"The way I am, Bee? How can you talk like that? You know your father is the kindest man. Doesn't he give you everything? He never . . ."

"He's good to us, of course," the child persisted. "It isn't that. It's just —you're sort of a slave to him. I guess all women are. You bet I won't be when I'm grown and married. You were worried all day yesterday for fear Miss Loftus would call last night, because she gets on Father's nerves."

"You know how nervous he is; mustn't be bothered. . . ."

"Oh, I know. Only it doesn't keep you from being a slave. You worry about what he eats—and if he's a little late, coming home from the office—and if company stays too late—and if the matinée lasts too long and he'll be home first—and about his meals and clothes."

"Nonsense," said Corinna. "You don't understand about men, dear. They like to have their meals on time, things regular. When you are grown up . . ."

When her daughter had gone away, Corinna looked back a little at her own life, started to think about things, puzzle over things as she had done when she was younger. With the children and all, there had been little time for introspection. She remembered what she had said to her mother, years before. She had believed—all this time —that she had followed her original plan of independence. She—a slave—to a man—as her mother had been—nonsense! Why—Arthur was no one to slave for—Arthur!

She had thought—all these years—indefinitely—that she still looked down on Arthur, did as she pleased. But she knew, finally now, that after the first year or two of matrimony she had never done that. She knew that her daughter was right, as she had been right. All she was living for was peace and quiet, a regular household, the children well, Arthur satisfied.

There had been quarrels, a few years before. But Corinna had found that Arthur hadn't greatly minded quarrelling. There were always quarrels in the office, it seemed. One quarrel more or less, in a day, hadn't mattered to him. But Corinna's day was so tasteless—children, the household—that it was Arthur's coming home that added flavour to her life. Arthur—whom she had so despised! She had wanted peace in the evenings, because evenings were the pleasantest part of the day. She knew now, as she must have recognized subconsciously then, that Arthur was the important thing in her life, that his home-comings were the big events for her.

Now she was fat and thirty-eight and already slightly wrinkled. There was nobody—nothing—she was interested in. The children—her home, of course —but outside of that. She doubted if she could take shorthand notes if she tried. She knew she could no longer operate a typewriter—older women couldn't get positions anyhow.

She thought of long days of dictation in an office, and shuddered. Arthur made a good living. There were two servants, now, and a good-sized apartment and a little place up in the country for the summer. They might even afford a small car next year. Arthur was particular, of course, a bit

cranky, even. He still cared for her, never looked at other women, she knew that. He was not very affectionate, never had been. She had been glad of that, at one time. Now she almost wished he were a bit more demonstrative. But he still spoke of their marriage as a success, of their affair as a "love match." She was glad he felt that way. After all, life was pleasant enough: little household things during the day, shopping, bridge, matinées—Arthur in the evenings. Other women envied her—her home and her children and Arthur. Why, Arthur was nicer than most husbands. She went over in her mind all of the women she knew—all the same—as they had been when she was a little girl—all struggling, working to please the man—the man—

Corinna remembered how strongly she had felt against this when she was a little girl. She knew how her daughter was beginning to feel now. It wasn't fair, of course. It didn't seem right—that the man should always come first, that his wishes should come first—that she should spend hours—her days—her life—planning for him, doing things for him—always the man—the man.

Yet Corinna thought of the women she knew who had never married—fearing each day that they'd be too old to be allowed to keep on working—discontented, lonely. She knew that women like herself who had accepted matrimony—or who had searched for and found matrimony—were slaves. It wasn't fair. But life wasn't fair to women. You couldn't get out of it—do anything about it. If you weren't married—and didn't have money—you were lonely, worked hard—had a difficult time of it. If you were married—Corinna knew people only in her own class—you were a slave—as much of a slave as if you had lived hundreds of years ago. Life was not beautiful nor romantic nor lovely. She did not love Arthur—yet, she certainly did not despise him—she really admired him a good deal—getting ahead without pull or anything like that. He worked hard—didn't get much out of life, either, deserved peace and quiet, things the way he wanted them at home. Life was funny, not especially interesting—children—little things. . . . She was a slave, of course—still, life was better than it might be—someone to look forward to seeing in the evenings—to worry about pleasing—to do things for—a man.

LEAVES

By Luis Muñoz Marin

WE shall forget our words,
We shall forget our hearts,
And in forgetting these, we forget all;
For we have words, then hearts, then . . . nothing more.

But these trees, my love, that have heard us,
These trees that are good and trusting and deep
With the eternal spirit of the earth,
Shall they forget?
I dread the reproach of their everlasting leaves.

THE LEGEND OF MARGARET

By Helen Woljeska

THEN her proud rival kept her in close confinement in the little tower room, and all the days of her life now passed in utter solitude.

But in those times beasts and things still conversed with humans—a practice which they have long since given up. Thus, solitude became full of subtle comradeship for her. The wide, curtained bed invited her to sleep within its perfumed depths, the carved chest kept faithful watch over her fine linens and silks, the spinning-wheel was ever ready to help pass the time, and the quaint lute to sing to her. From the deep window seat she could look far across the land and up into the sky's mysterious depths; the wild clouds were her friends, and the birds her playfellows. And a bejewelled book carried her fancies to far-away lands and times.

What else could she want?

Although no human being ever approached her, except the silent servant who once a day came to attend to her wants, she finally succeeded in being peacefully and perfectly happy. All wild bliss and misery were forgotten. She no longer yearned for freedom and love. And so the years passed, swiftly, softly, without leaving marks on the flowerlike beauty of her lovely, peaceful face.

The years passed. Ten of them. Then the proud Fredegunde died. And Margaret's lover learned that his long-mourned sweetheart still lived! Then he swore and blasphemed and prayed with a mighty voice, and finally, taking the silent servant rudely by the shoulder, bade her lead him at once to the tower room.

Margaret stood by her window. The swallows twittered about her. And the May morning enveloped her in its delicate golden radiance. She was part of the perfumed peace of spring.

Suddenly loud footsteps approached her silent and secret door. With a great crash it opened. And a man broke uncouthly upon her golden solitude. Brown and big he stood there, awkward as a bear, and his voice sounded crude and wild. Frightened, the swallows whirred away. And Margaret, aghast, raised imploring hands to heaven. But her lover, mad with joy on seeing her more beautiful than ever, rushed upon her, seized her with big, hard arms, and crushed her to his breast.

"Margaret—Margaret—do you still know me—do you still love me—?" he cried, while, in spite of her tears and pleadings, he kissed her again and again.

Finally Margaret stopped sobbing. She looked at him long, earnestly, questioningly. Then she said: "Why is it that a woman would rather be unhappy with a man than happy alone?"

And her lover laughed his coarsely happy, loud laugh. Evidently he considered her question a pleasing answer to his own.

LA BELLE HOBBS

By John Chapin Mosher

INFINITE nonsense has been written about her ever since her success in Paris, and since that Bourbon marquis shot himself on her doorstep. Of course the most outrageous scandals have been prevalent until the moralists cannot conceive the hardihood with which she still smiles across the footlights and in innumerable photographs.

Romance must be the common fare of such a woman. It is quaint of her, and doubtless good advertising to choose the quaint sobriquet of Hobbs. It means of course that her real name is Castiglione, or even de Vere. In the stage-world people lie on principle. Hence you will not believe this story, even with its touch of sentiment, but you will read it because it is about Helen Hobbs, and you will go again to see her dance, and shudder and quake at the idea of what must have been the real life of such a woman.

I

SHE was born in that upstate New York town of Ovid which is like every other town in that part of the country, with orchards and some fancy gardening, proud of its Civil War veterans and its prize pumpkins. Her family named her Helen, not after the Trojan lady who burned the topless towers, but after Aunt Helen Saxby, who might thus be cajoled into leaving the girl her money. The beauty that launched a thousand ships did not run in that family. It was not to be expected, nor was it desired. But there was a good chance for the money.

It was one of those neat twists that the fates enjoy. The money was to be left to another branch of the family who were not, it was announced, such "characters" as Helen's own; and from some forgotten source, the unforeseen beauty fell to the girl's lot.

But long before the beauty showed itself, while her hair hung in strings about her long pale face, another thing was to prove just as valuable to her career and was spreading stories about her throughout the town. Mrs. Johnson, the boarding-house keeper, where the Hobbses sometimes took their meals, found her once sitting on the back steps with the big cat in her arms. The cat didn't like it, and there was a little stream of blood where his claws had dug into her. Mrs. Johnson heard Helen murmuring to herself.

"It hurts like anything, but I'm not goin' to let you go till I'm ready to!"

If she looked like a nervous jackdaw in her own clothes, nobody else at least might flaunt their finery long before her. She was a great believer in taking the wind out of people's sails, and very expert in the art. When Mamie Roberts in a new shirt-waist and skirt descended from the teacher's platform, conscious of the envious gaze of the whole school, it was Helen's shrill whisper that spread abroad the one delicate feature of Mamie's purple and fine linen:

"I could see her flannel panties."

Later her tongue grew sharper. She needed it for defence too often. Others than her Aunt Helen began to refer to the family as "characters." Pa Hobbs, when Helen was about fifteen, lost heavily in investments that only a particularly gullible man would have con-

sidered. He tried to counterbalance this reflection on his intelligence by a vaunted superiority in other lines. He accused the townspeople of being numskulls before they could call him a fool. He attacked their manner of living with a fusillade of scientific terms and a barrage of efficiency maxims, and offended reputable ladies with a reference to their protoplasms.

Of course he never ate meat, and was literally kicked out of Jim Sales's store for declaiming that man should live on roots and berries, in tablet form. Such vehemence and such indifference to logic must have found him adherents had he only survived his own enthusiasm. At least he perished in the practice of his creed, a cramp seizing him in the November plunge that he advocated for everybody. The town knew that it was "bound to happen."

It was hard for Mrs. Hobbs. But she had her own "bug." Art was hers. She had an idea that the way to cope with this mansard-roofed civilization was to wind a Greek fillet around her head and in a crisis appeal to the patronage of one Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

Mrs. Johnson, to whose house Mrs. Hobbs and her daughter now moved, bore the brunt of this development. Art permeated her house like the Tuesday cabbage dinner. It might be only a lily in the umbrella stand or tulle tied around the banisters, but she never came out of her kitchen to climb the carpeted, brass-rodded stairs, that she did not find some new outbreak. It got on her nerves. It began to haunt her. But she was a philosopher, and when by some weird coincidence years later she was brought in touch with the Bakst treatment of colour, she could only throw up her hands with "It's a mercy I was spared that."

With such a family it was only to be expected that Helen would do something a little out of the ordinary. It was a great relief to every mother in the county when they found she was not to be such a dangerous belle as her looks threatened to make her. The young gentlemen of the town preferred clinging and admiring young ladies. Helen never clung, and she admired very little, never their new neckties, their dogs, nor their coats of tan. And she was only sixteen when she announced to the world, or whatever part was interested in hearing it, that she was going on the stage.

"Of course I am," she would say, "look at me dance."

And she would spin and pirouette for a gaping roomful of farm hands and shopkeepers.

"You don't think that a girl who can dance like that," she would demand of them, "will ever take in sewing or marry Jim Sales, do you?"

It was plain to the eyes of the whole town that it was time someone took that girl in charge. All the mothers would do it, if they didn't have their own progeny on hand; and the unmarried ladies had their committees, and their papers for the Louisa M. Alcott Club. And it appeared that Helen must be left to her own devices and the preraphaelite ethics of her mother, when an angel appeared in the guise of a school-teacher—quite in the manner of the novels the Louisa M. Alcott Club was brought up on.

Jane Gifford had ten years behind her of unscrupulous addition, subtraction and long division. She betrayed no enthusiasm in anything during these years except what A did to B, and X to Y, and was only under the slightest suspicions that she held the binominal theorem to be more important than the Ten Commandments.

Her interest in Helen was highly commended. What patience she showed with the child; what a spirit of devotion! Helen's last year in school established her as one almost torn from the mire by her teacher's sense of consecration to the individual. Quite a fever of virtuous enthusiasm was worked up about her "case." Then on the last day of school Miss Gifford announced that she had accepted a position to teach in New York. And it became known almost at once that she had invited Helen to come and live

with her. . . . Miss Gifford was not urged to read her paper on the heroines of Cooper to the Louisa M. Alcott Club. Mrs. Roberts said she knew now where Helen got her ideas.

That last summer would have been thoroughly miserable for Helen, a lonely and harassed prologue to her life in New York, if she had not had her dancing class. The cousins that Aunt Helen had favoured as being more normal persons, perhaps with some sense of recompense invited Helen to join the class they were having twice a week during July. It was only for the modern dances, they explained, with some idea that Helen only approved of Isadora and Pavlova. But she was delighted. She had never danced except at the town affairs, and had never had any instruction whatsoever.

The young Mr. Morgen, who conducted the class, under strict chaperonage of course, had ingratiated himself with the Rochesterians who boasted of metropolitan manners. His antecedents were a mystery. It was rumoured, and never deliberately denied, that he was connected with the millionaire family. Otherwise it was only known that he had been on the stage, in the bond business, had studied for the church till his views made him give it up, had taught literature in a middle western university, and had led a life of elegant seclusion in Pomfret, Conn.

At all events his hair had a wave. like the back of a Belter chair, his manicure was always crystalline, and he knew every step and dip that was torturing the ankles and arches of the most modish dowagers. In August he was to dance at a Saratoga hotel during the racing season.

With a social sense as delicate as the ear of a musician, Mr. Morgen had no time for a country cousin. But Helen soon found that this young man liked to dance with her. She was quick to see that, when his smooth, massaged face showed the fagged lines it sometimes did at the end of a lesson, he would turn to her, and they would one-step until his lightness came back to him. He seemed to her the first partner she had ever known who knew the meaning of rhythm.

It was after such a dance that he once said to her:

"You'd go in the profession with our dancing."

She had never told him her plan, but she answered then at once:

"I'm going to New York to try, this fall."

He lighted up.

"It's the life," he whispered, "Broadway—I never get far from it. And you'll *take*. You've got the style. You need trimming, but I can tell."

Helen noticed that a sort of bond seemed established between them after this, a bond that might be expected to arise from some rare mutual experience, dividing them from the rest of the world. It was her first contact with the great confraternity of the footlights, of those who amuse to live, of the world that survives on a parody, where a career is made with a strip of chiffon and where a contortion makes a fortune.

But with Helen, also, Mr. Morgen maintained the mystery of his past. Once or twice she thought he would tell her, but he only bit his lips, stumbled a moment and hurried on to some anecdote of the admirable qualities of his particular acquaintance, until all New York appeared a nest of altruism.

"Generous!" Mr. Morgen would cry, "why, my dear, that man let that boy wear his diamond ring to get a job with!"

So buoyant was her assurance, so near her flight from Ovid, that she was affable even to the people in town during that last month. And their anger now turned on Miss Gifford. They had for Helen a certain tolerant goodwill. She even had a flirtation with a travelling man who named his suspenders after her, and another with a young man of artistic bent who reminded her of Morgen, named Nash, who said that pink gave him a nausea. Other boys, too, crowded around Mrs. Johnson's front porch, and Mamie Roberts imi-

tated the way Helen did her hair. But when Miss Gifford wrote that the apartment was ready, Helen vanished from town with the most perfunctory farewells.

"Her art has claimed her," was Mrs. Hobbs' only illumination on the subject. It was about this time that she began to be held "a bit touched in the head," a reputation she held until her daughter's success lifted her to eminence and a place of authority in the Louisa M. Alcott Club, where her pre-raphaelite tendencies flourished with respected abandon.

II

As for Helen, she rose from the débris of her dreams of New York, with as definite a purpose as she had visioned in the imagined city. It was a far more real thing to her than these trestles and skyscrapers, these elbows and staccatos. It was as graspable a thing as a trapeze is to an acrobat who, missing the rope he leaped for, is lucky enough to find another. His dizziness too as he swings above the blare of bands, the white stripe of faces, the tumult of the rings, was hers those first days in New York. But she never lost hold. A few people in this rabble could dance, and a few others could show her the way to the goal she wanted. The rest of the world did not count.

It was all in keeping with the single-track character of her interest to scrape up an acquaintance with Roderick Wright. Or rather admit him to her acquaintance which until his entrée had included only Miss Gifford. He passed them the salt and the sugar and the pepper at the Violet Vat, in Greenwich Village, where they were having fried eggs and coffee on mauve china, and then asked Helen if he might draw her. She said he might not. Whereat he showed her the sketch of the profile he had already made—done while she was eating her cabbage soup.

Helen felt the pressure of Ovid convention to turn her back on him, but she liked the sketch and remembered this was Bohemia where one must expect such liberties. She must remember that dancing was an art, too, and must not be too harsh on the breed.

"You've got lines," the young man continued. "I noticed you when you came in. It's too bad you wear sport clothes. You're not that type at all."

Here Miss Gifford took a hand in the situation.

She leaned forward and very deliberately gave him the look she generally reserved for young people who copied other people's answers to how many feet were in three miles, seven yards and three inches.

The young man was not abashed. He returned her stare casually. Evidently she had not "lines" and therefore did not concern him. Miss Gifford could at least express her disapproval by a departure and she hustled Helen out.

"We should never go to such places. I've felt that from the beginning," she almost stormed. The young man's composure had disconcerted her.

"Well, we'll never have to go there again," replied Helen, which was a comfortable truth to reassure Miss Gifford.

And therefore Helen went there alone the very next day, and had a long discussion on sport clothes and lines with Roderick Wright. She had never met anyone like him. He was entirely different from Mr. Morgen, or from Mr. Nash who was so sensitive to pink, or certainly from anyone else who had ever ventured to Ovid to mow hay, or to sell suspenders. His hands she noticed at once. They looked as though they were made of tissue paper —only strong underneath.

"He knows all about the theatre," she said to herself after the second meeting.

It had made her impatient to feel she was giving any time to an interest not in this line.

She found herself, too, more right on this score than she had expected. Roderick made an almost substantial income for his phase of existence, drawing black and whites for the

fashion and decorative arts magazines, designing costumes for fancy dress balls, and occasionally a set for a new cabaret. He was a mechanic of the vanities. A ball meant to him what a cold wave does to a coal-dealer. He was an artisan of the harlequinade, and a serious worker. Tissue paper, but steel underneath.

And this steel element, so strangely contrasted, fascinated Helen. He was as relentless as steel, and supple as steel. His eyes, when they turned from the paper he was working on, bored through the sham about him like gimlets. His trade was a thing of curves and shadows, but he had been trained in the school of "pay-me-first." Through him she got her first job.

It was in a pageant of a big Hallowe'en ball at Webster Hall. She appeared as a Mænad with grape leaves in her hair, and scored a success. A cartoonist she had heard of even in Ovid wanted to dance with her. It was as though a prince of the blood had noticed her. And she received three other engagements to appear, at a studio ball as Astarte, at a private affair uptown as Maud Muller, and at the "Colyumists' Ball" next month as a Sunday Supplement. She had no idea how to interpret all these titles, but Roderick—always beside her—nudged her to accept them all.

"Will I get paid?" she asked, wonderingly.

"One never knows," Roderick answered grimly. "You can't count on that at first. But it's good publicity."

One boy dressed as a French sailor proposed to her. He was slightly drunk and very eloquent about the little home she would have as the mother of his children. He had just come to New York to get a job. Acceptances were so much in the air that Helen felt she was breaking a rule of etiquette to refuse him. She told this to Roderick and was puzzled and a little hurt that he only laughed at the affair.

She received twenty-five dollars for her part in the programme of the Hallowe'en Ball. It was the beginning of her professional career—her début. She fulfilled all the engagements she received that evening, and felt them successful since they led to others.

She learned one point from them. Both the studio and the columnists paid her, but the fashionable up-town affair was very considerate in seeing that she had a dish of ice-cream and two *petits fours*—like everybody else—and graciously made her keep her Maud Muller costume. She was resentful, but Roderick took it so much as a matter of course that she laughed, and put down to her account for that month's earnings $50 and one sunbonnet.

Through his acquaintance with art editors, Roderick next got her a chance to pose in a series of fashion pictures that enabled her to send dazzling series of photographs to Ovid, representing her life in New York in a setting of ermine and crêpe velvet. Actually the pictures were so profitable that she was able to consider having something more than a milk-shake for lunch.

She made no money to speak of, but with a spindly allowance from home she was able to scrape along as well as most of the people she met. She was too interested to be discouraged. She could hardly expect to make more definite progress; she had escaped Ovid, and she was learning her trade. And also, while never losing the keen edge of her determination, she was developing an affection for the raggle-taggle, hit-and-miss existence of this half of the world. With Roderick for a laconic interpreter, she began to comprehend the crazy patch-work of this caravanserai. She grew used to people who gave up meals for silk lingerie, to old men who waxed bitter on the subject of cretonnes, to a whole society with no more than a week's capital ahead.

III

She grew to admire rather than to be startled by a friend of Roderick's, Mrs. Caleb Westminster, who kept a shop for antiques in Madison Avenue. Mrs. Westminster invited her to spend

a week-end at her cottage in Harmon. It was a modish little affair "done over" in a rather liberal mid-Victorianism, with more silk tassels than plumbing. She was a blithe wasp of a woman, with the poise of a buccaneer, and the wit of a curb-broker. Did she not do business with the very rich?

Just as Helen arrived Mrs. Westminster was called to the telephone.

"Pay my bill this week?" Helen heard her say. "Why, I expect to pay it this week, of course. But I can't promise. And I don't want to promise," her voice throbbed with an angelic righteousness, "and then have to break it." Then, with a new, sharper note, "Since you've called me I feel it my duty to tell you that several times lately the milk has been sour.—Oh, no, I haven't complained. I know this is an out-of-the-way place, and the hill is steep. I appreciate all that. But of course if the milk keeps on being sour I'll have to try someone else. I told some of my friends—who spoke about your milk—that I was sure it wasn't your fault.—Yes, I'll overlook it this time."

And she came rustling back to Helen, with triumph agleam in her eyes.

"It's that big milk company," she elucidated, "I'd never hold up on a small private business. But they can afford to wait a week or two, or"—(she shrugged her shoulders humorously)—"a month or two for that matter."

Mrs. Westminster had another guest this week-end, a large woman, Belle Donlon, who appeared to be one who might be the life and soul of a Sunday school picnic, but who was in reality a private detective in a big department store. At dinner Belle regaled them with anecdotes of her profession. Only yesterday she had discovered a clergyman stuffing silk stockings up his waistcoat.

She had had a short run in the chorus herself, in her youth, and she was interested in Helen.

"I can't help thinking you'll get on, dearie," she exclaimed during the salad, "I can tell you're the type. But there's nothing in the whole game if you don't land it across with one of the high muck-a-mucks. There's not so much difference between us who's left the chorus, for the good of the community, lookin' at it both ways, and those who gets their clothes given to 'em free, so long as they'll wear 'em. It's just that they happened to get seen. Someway or other you have got to get looked at in the rush."

Mrs. Westminster, who had great confidence in Belle's eye, was impressed enough by her interest in Helen to offer to speak to a managerial acquaintance who was beginning rehearsals for a summer show.

Belle Donlon seized on the idea before Helen could answer.

"Einstein's the bird," she declared.

She too would speak to Einstein, who was also an old friend of hers. Everybody was either an old friend to Miss Donlon or a crook after the notions. Helen had not yet been on the legitimate stage and "Miss Pekinese" would be an excellent experiment. Early the next afternoon she left Harmon to meet Roderick at the Violet Vat and get his opinion.

To her surprise Roderick was nowhere to be seen. She ate the bowl of potato soup, and as she had a three-course midday dinner that day, and it would be extravagant to eat more now, she decided to call at once at his studio.

She often met him at his studio, a curious impersonal sort of place that any number of people trailed through at all hours except when Roderick locked himself in to work. It had been a basement kitchen of a private house, which, however, when the rest of the house was made over into apartments had been transformed into a separate and complete establishment. The black stove still remained, but the walls had been painted a dull orange and the woodwork a pale green.

Finding the door locked Helen was sure Roderick was inside, and she rapped boldly a second time, and then called impatiently:

"Roddy, let me in."

Roderick threw the door open, and closed it after her.

"Why didn't you meet me for supper?"

"I didn't want any."

She looked about the room. It was in its usual disorder of half-finished sketches, of covers and illustrations torn from magazines, of fragments of silk and brocade. Helen always felt like a morsel from a scrap bag in that room, a bit of hat trimming. One might run a pin through her and wear her to the matinée.

It was nothing unusual for Roderick to omit a meal under the stress of a pressing order, or in the enthusiasm of a new design.

"Did Carter give you another order?"—Carter was the editor who had used her for his fashion pictures.

"He turned down the others," replied Roderick without accent.

"Turned them down?" Helen was aghast. "Why you worked on those two weeks. They were lovely."

"He wouldn't give me what I asked. They're paying de Costa twice as much as they do me. And look at the smudges he hands them."

The rejected drawings lay on the table and Helen turned them over. The feather-fine lines, the suggestive modern shading seemed beautiful to her. In her eyes he was all genius. This order had been a big one. Roderick was low in funds, and had worked on these, as he sometimes did work, until his nerves were drawn taut with the concentration and the coffee and the lack of sleep.

It was inconceivable to her that this steel guide of hers should ever break down, but suddenly she saw that he was almost ready to. He snatched the sketches from her, and would have torn them in pieces had she not rescued them.

"Don't, don't, Roddy!" she screamed.

"They're rotten enough," he cried, and then in abandonment to the despair he felt he threw himself on the couch.

"I'm all in," he moaned. Then, "I didn't mean to let myself go."

She stood beside him a moment. Then, suddenly—something she had never dreamt of doing before—she sank on her knees beside him and stroked his forehead.

"Don't bother—they are lovely," she murmured over him.

Then she rose with the wisest inspiration of the moment.

"We'll go to the pastry shop and get some supper."

She persuaded him to pull himself together, and she was conscious of concealing an air of victory when she finally got him out and led him down the street. And as the long slim figures of this couple, the dancer and the artist, strode to their supper of cocoa and crullers, the dancer felt herself a new responsibility that brought with it a most terrifying maturity.

Not that Roderick lost his prestige as the ultimate oracle of her destiny. He decided that "Miss Pekinese" would at least be experience. And since there would be no more costume balls this season, and Carter would not be likely now to oblige them with more posings, she could afford to experiment with a play that, Roderick assured her, was a certain failure.

Helen, therefore, sought out Belle Donlon in the department store and while that guardian of public morality eyed an overblonde widow fingering the taffetas, told her that she wanted nothing better than a chance with "Miss Pekinese."

Evidently the worthy Belle had not over-estimated her influence with Mr. Einstein. He accepted Helen without preliminaries and with an almost gallant flexibility placed her in the chorus.

It was the most unremitting, the most exhausting work she had ever imagined. Sheer drudgery! With a dozen other girls she paraded back and forth for hours at a time, singing over and over again:

"Little Miss Pekinese,
I'd crawl on my knees,
Across the seas,
To little Miss Pekinese."

The first rehearsals were held in an empty loft of a storage building, and when the girls were too fatigued to do more, they were allowed to rest on camp stools scattered about the back of the room, while the principals bulldozed their way through the big scenes. There was no real rest, though, for them in this, for they must keep every nerve alert for the first signal from the director to repeat their act. And while they waited they could hear a vaudeville team rehearsing on the floor below. In her sleep the poor, flogged humour pranced through Helen's brain:

"Why does a lamp chimney smoke?"

"Because it can't chew."

And the high scream that followed every repetition:

"Make 'em think it's funny!"

Helen was too used up after a day of such torture to make friends with any of the company. But with real tact she avoided making any enemies, which was remarkable since the director showed an inclination to bring her to the front. During these weeks of rehearsal her only solace was an occasional supper with Roderick at the Violet Vat.

It was impossible for Helen with her lack of experience on the stage to form any estimate of the value of the show. But she had thought they were far from being ready when Mr. Einstein announced the opening try-out performance at Poughkeepsie. Gossip explained that Mr. Einstein had the offer of the particular theatre he wanted at an especially low price, and was staking all on a gamble that there might be something in the old truck anyway. The Nestors of the chorus predicted without hesitation a speedy and painless death.

IV

It was, as it turned out, as speedy and painless as death could be no place but on the stage. For three weeks of rehearsal and one week's actual presentation, Helen drew her one week's pay and left behind even the spirit of "Miss Pekinese," too fragile a lady even for obsequies, a slighted beauty in spite of those who vowed to crawl on their knees across the seas to do her homage.

Indeed her dissolution was ghoulishly matter of fact. A glum Poughkeepsie, all in tone with the atmosphere of the hotel bedrooms vouchsafed the lovely ladies of the chorus. A first night in New York, a scalding July first night, with office boys in the critics' seats, a curtain that stuck, and a heat that made the grease-paint drip.

Helen was not at all depressed by the failure of the play. Miss Gifford assured her that she was exquisite—the only one on the stage. Roderick, without *blague*, vowed she "showed off." Mrs. Westminster and Belle Donlon both sent her notes, one accrediting her with "personality" and the other with "presence" which, being pleasant qualities to possess, consoled her somewhat for so much arduous toil for so little actual cash.

"Just wait till some one sees you," Belle Donlon assured her, "then they'll name a corset after you quick enough."

But Helen found that she was a long way from being seen yet.

Though "Miss Pekinese" had not discouraged her—the opposite if anything—the weeks that followed went a long way toward doing so. She was determined now to dance only on the stage, to waste no more time on costume balls and pageants. And sometimes during these weeks she did think she might just as well have remained in Ovid. Several times a day she was informed that she hadn't enough experience, that she was too tall, too dark, that they wanted a red-headed girl, and often told nothing but to get out.

She devised the most astonishing history of herself, which she told so many times that she almost forgot the facts of her own life. She had danced in Paris and Petrograd, and been the life and soul of a Missouri musical comedy. She had played Ophelia in Seattle, and been compared to Gaby in New Mexico.

But all this romancing failed to land an engagement. She even considered a

vaudeville act that would break the first and fundamental rule she had learned by taking her away from New York, on the road. Her partner, though, was an inch shorter than she. It was inexcusable. He couldn't "one-step with a totem pole"; she heard him wail. "Little runt," she flung back at him in the manner of her old school days, and she stamped out of the office.

Roderick was very important these days. Whenever she felt like hopping into the river, she would go instead to call on Roderick and tidy up his place a bit for him. Roderick of course could never draw when the chairs were being turned upside down, and he was generally driven to some desperate measure such as reading poetry.

Helen found poetry a great help in her cleaning. There were some verses that reminded her of the life she saw about her: "oh, charm of rouge on fragile cheek." And she was inspired to polish the stove by the cadence of:

"Oh, bitterness of things too sweet,
Oh, broken singing of the dove,
Love's wings are overfleet,
And like the panther's feet,
The feet of love."

Some Sunday afternoons Roderick gave teas for a motley crew from their world: Mrs. Westminster, brilliant in the evasion of her bills; Belle Donlon, with new tales of what humanity will do for a bit of lace, the young sailor of Helen's first ball, now too sophisticated on $24 a week to propose to anybody; even de Costa who was suspected of imitating Roderick's pen and inks, and once or twice the great Carter himself, who cut rather a sad figure in private life and was given to pondering on such philosophical problems as why men on crutches always go to buffet lunches.

Once Helen hung up all of Roderick's drawings, and they had an exhibition, and Roderick allowed himself to be acclaimed a coming young man by ten people, a real artist by six, a genius by two, and got three orders out of it. He was, of course, very nonchalant about it. But after all his guests but Helen had gone, he found in himself the most unexpected ability to play the banjo that someone had left behind, and sang a song, which is just as conceivable a bit of natural history as Mr. Swinburne's treatise on the panther's feet:

"Glow, little glow-worm,
Glimmer, glimmer,
Lead us lest too far we wander,
Love's own light is shining yonder—
Glow, little glow-worm,
Glimmer, glimmer."

And he wasn't prompted to sing the words, be it noted, till Helen declared that the picture he had drawn of Night was altogether too exquisite to be buried in the folio, and must face the world from the point of honour over the stove. And Roderick bent over her fingers in the old gallant style, and vowed that every lovely line in the figure of this lady of Night, she had given him. Which was a proper answer, for the lady in the picture represented no sombre night, no night of the wilderness, but a very modern, civilized night, a night of slippers with rosettes, a coiffured night, a night with a beauty patch —and all the stars were in the mesh of her train.

There was something especially catching too in a solitary flower arranged in space where it might just balance the rosette on the pointed slipper in the opposite corner. It was a conventionalized blossom, of course. It might be a dahlia or a daisy or an Egyptian lotus that Night had flung from her tapering fingers with all their rings. Its four preposterous petals gave a "note" to the whole picture. It was such a triumphant bit of fauna, asserting itself with such bravado, as though it had nothing but jeers for this splendid damsel who would have nothing of it.

Then Helen pinned at her bosom three of the rich red roses they had dared to deck the green and orange room with—it was a mistake but was considered quite an effect—and she and

Roderick went for their cocoa and crullers at the pastry shop. And afterwards, because the night invited, they took a ramble which had a very important bearing upon their careers.

As the streets of pleasure were to these two the real business streets, it was only natural that they should seek now other parts of the city. And they walked down long silent blocks of warehouses, where there is always an unheeded tinkling of burglar alarms, as if, at that moment, all about, thieves were stuffing their pockets.

In so short a time it was almost record speed—so quickly did their long strides carry them over the ground—they found themselves in that district which is, at night, as beautiful and mystical as, in the daytime, its towers and roofs appear to a newcomer in the harbour. Here a night watchman saw them steal within the portico of a great bank, and he tiptoed about to see what business was in the offing now. Then just as stealthily he crept away, and was in a good humour for the rest of the night. And the scrubwoman at dawn found red rose petals on the stone steps, and crossed herself lest it be St. Cecilia had loitered there.

The dancer told the artist that night under the portico that she would marry him. It was all very idyllic, and must have hallowed for ever with romance Wall Street, Rector Street, Lower Broadway and the Battery.

But when Helen awoke next day she rose with the bitter decision that she could never marry Roderick while she was one of the army of the unemployed. She could never permit herself to be a burden on the shoulders of genius. How could Roderick—how could any man—give his full power to putting rosettes on the slippers of a conspicuously fastidious night, and of creating those ladies with one line and a dot in their faces, if he had a wife who couldn't even get a job in the chorus?

When Roderick saw her mind was made up on that matter he did his best to help her, but with his first suggestion made a very bad start.

"Have you tried Dreifeldt?"

Which might have been a taunt as well as advice, and Helen told him so.

"Dreifeldt?" she cried, "Dreifeldt! I might as well go to the King of England, I might as well dance for Congress while they're rowing over their silly bills. I might as well go to the White House and order the President to watch me dance. I think you're out of your head! I think you're quite mad. I should have guessed it when you asked me to marry you."

And she stormed out, leaving Roderick quite unable to work for the rest of the day, though he was well started on a Pierrot showing off something new in cigarette cases. And Helen vowed then and there that she wouldn't go near Roderick again until she had really got something.

V

Belle Donlon was a great consolation during the next weeks when Helen had deprived herself of Roderick.

"You've got grit," she told her. "You'll land! Luck's bound to change, and someone will get a slant on you."

And luck did change, the way luck does, on the very last day, at the most dismal and hopeless moment.

The impossible happened on a cold, rainy November morning. Helen stood on an upper Park Avenue corner waiting for a car that was not stuffed to the doors with people. And in every one of her significant lines she was looking as all women look when they are thinking that they might just as well marry Jim Sales and be done with it.

Miss Gifford had forced her to go to a spiritualistic séance the night before, which had been drearily without a phantom, except for one wraith of a practical turn who had spirited off her umbrella. And naturally after such an episode it was drizzling, and threatening to settle down into a steady shower. Helen had just reached that frame of mind when if the old woman who asked her way to the elevated station had added succinctly: "My dear, I am your

fairy god-mother, and your reply is so courteous you may have anything you wish," she would have demanded only an umbrella.

Thus she may be excused for staring earnestly at a young man strolling up the street with an especially luxurious breadth of shelter.

And then, the first turn of luck, the young man was not one she had vowed never to speak to again, nor one who knows that woman must be dodged at all costs, but none other than Mr. Morgen of the dancing class.

"You don't know me?" she cried out to him, with a laugh no man would dream of dodging.

"Helen Hobbs," he sang out, "I was just thinking about you."

Of course Mr. Morgen was doing something as agreeable as that. Helen felt, as she fell into stride with him, that she had never appreciated him in Rochester. His enthusiasm was unabated. She noticed his skilful side glances take in the detail of her frock, and his voice bespoke a new respect.

They sought refuge from the elements in a tea-shop that also proffered breakfast, and over coffee and toast, Helen's true spirit returned. Mr. Morgen grew eloquent. He had just come through a great ordeal, had had to bear more than his share of the human lot of suffering. He had been dancing a whole season at a Chicago hotel.

"It took nerve, but I got good money. It was the swellest hotel. And they was glad enough to get a real first-class New York dancer. But it's a risk. You might die out there."

He was the same Mr. Morgen, but she saw that she was not the same Helen Hobbs to him. She might almost be admitted to an equality of position. Not a wave in her hair, not a fold of her skirt missed his shrewd scrutiny, and no modiste had a surer eye. And she was approved. There was no doubt of the sincere intonation in the eloquent words: "How well you done yourself!"

Under the warming spell of the coffee and his easy camaraderie Helen sketched the history of her life in New York, dealing very frankly, except for Roderick's part in it, with her present predicament.

"I can't go on for ever," she said, "in costume balls and fashion pictures, and never get any further. You know that's so."

Mr. Morgen could give her that only sympathy that is ever welcome; the sympathy of one who has been often in the same place.

He grew very grave over her problem. Helen suspected that he felt a certain responsibility for her welfare. Had he not encouraged her to leave Ovid?

"I haven't told you everything about myself," he began after a moment.

It was perfectly obvious that Mr. Morgen never told everything about himself to anyone, and now Helen wanted to talk about her own life, not his. But she hid her impatience. This mystery about Mr. Morgen's antecedents had always bored her. Since coming to New York she had grown convinced that he was only the product of the last row of the grand finale. But Mr. Morgen evidently expected to surprise her.

"Dreifeldt," he said—and she almost left him, she was so tired of this name which meant all that was unattainable, "Dreifeldt, the manager, you know—well, he once done my father out of a big business—he's crooked as they make 'em; and then he married my father's sister, so he sort of owes something to the family. Tries to make up for the dirt he played in his life. He got me this job in Chicago, and I'm in high now with the old fellow. Thinks I showed lots of character in sticking the way I did. And he's right."

Helen was drawing on her gloves long before he had finished this speech.

"Really," she said, and she smiled at him in a way she never had dreamt of smiling, when he had known her in Rochester, "that's your little secret. He must be a help to you. Now tell me," and she leaned earnestly across the table, "do you think I ought to give up

musical comedy for Shakespeare? I have had this offer to do Juliet—"

"Don't!" Mr. Morgen was emphatic. "It's a duty for girls like you to stand by the musical shows. Anybody can do Shakespeare—oh, I don't mean that, but the real class go into the musical, and you know it."

He tapped her arm authoritatively.

Helen shrugged her shoulders, and looked into space past the preserve jars in the window to the bleak heaven beyond.

She did not stir when Mr. Morgen rushed eagerly on, "Now you go and see Dreifeldt. Here's my card. Don't you go and give your life up to Shakespeare."

Helen found strength enough to take the card, and murmuring that she would try to drop in on his uncle and wouldn't decide on the Juliet proposition too impulsively, she left him so hurriedly at the door of the tea-shop that she even forgot to escort him under his umbrella to the subway.

VI

Helen had fought to the death with so many managers that she never dreamt that she would ever be afraid of one again. But when she found that Mr. Morgen's card actually did clear the way for her to the Dreifeldt sanctuary, she could not forget that on this interview her success depended. It was too rare a chance ever to come a second time. And thus it came about that the first glimpse Mr. Dreifeldt had of this girl his nuisance of a nephew was plaguing him with brought to his mind his favourite axiom:

"Them as ain't sure of themselves, I'm sure ain't no good."

It was indeed with a timidity that had more of the Ovid maidenly honesty in it than she had ever exhibited in that town, that she stood before him and, at a word from his assistant, pivoted as a Lucile mannequin pivots to show off a gown. The familiar gesture restored her assurance and, as she faced Dreifeldt again, she smiled. But the smile of the great Helen would have been lost on Dreifeldt. He was not even bothering to notice her.

To her it was not Dreifeldt she was pivoting for, it was all Broadway! To Broadway she was smiling, and to Broadway offering thus her best grace and youth and beauty. And Broadway had shut its eyes, was sagging with utter boredom. It was an intolerable rebuff.

"Damn you, look at me!" and as she cried it, her small fist came down hard on the table before the swollen image of Broadway. And Broadway looked. How could he help it then?

For a moment she had all his attention. It was all in the world that she wanted. She answered his glare with a smile, a guileless smile, that greeted a world that was so altogether ripping and so free from trouble and worry and all that sort of thing. And Broadway looked and nodded and grunted:

"You're took."

Someway or other she got out and away, and walked down the street that was to love her, without dancing and singing all the way as she felt she should.

It was only human not to tell Roddy at once, to sneak into his studio with a dejection that was a screaming performance and that would move to delight any gallery in the world. And when Roderick had only abuse for her neglect of him, and announced coolly that it would be convenient for him to marry her to-morrow, humbly to answer, "Yes, sir."

The ceremony was not performed at the Little Church Around the Corner, nor at any of the celebrated shrines where the brides in Irish lace and diamond solitaires vow to love, honour and obey. The artist and his dancing girl were not of these. They were of that fragile world whose estate is but pearl powder and whose heritage a fiddler's tune. And so they were married without pomp and ceremony, coming next in line after two negroes named Lily and Cuthbert, at the City Hall.

And Helen, thinking all the time what a good joke she was springing on Roderick (said to be a common reflection of the bride's) was so amused that the clerk interrupted his reading of the worldly goods paragraph to tell them, "Just laugh it out," which they both did.

VII

Of course it is only five years since La Belle Hobbs has been known at all in the theatrical world, five years from obscurity to a world-wide reputation. Dreifeldt, the manager, it was said by the *Times* and *Tribune*, had found her doing a tarantella in an East Side cabaret in order to send her brother through Yale and, appreciating her ability, had engaged her at once for his next revue.

There were also jocular Reisenweber cynics who said she had dropped an iced coin down his neck just before he rose to speak at a dinner to the fashionable mystical playwright of the day. It was merely that Mr. Dreifeldt had tried to speak in French; and then the additionally astonishing rumour came to light that not only did poor Helen have to dance all night for the brother's college education, but she also had to wait on table between times—and Mr. Dreifeldt had not been able to conceal his surprise at finding his consommé passed to him by one of his own ladies of the chorus. It all duly got into the *Times* and *Tribune* the way things will.

In fact the poor girl seemed doomed never to be spared public attention. She was the one who had that unfortunate accident on the stage, not that it wasn't very graceful, and of course there were girls on the stage at that moment who had less on, but it did attract notice.

It was useless, it was reported, to try to keep a girl like that in the back row, or in any row for that matter. A song-writer had to give up his trip to Florida to write in a special number for her. Then the Bourbon affair placed her high in the skyline of celebrities. There was a great deal of sympathy for the marquis, strange to say, even among the middle classes. It was felt that he was not to be blamed for the business. What could any man do in the hands of such a woman! It was generally known that he wanted to marry her. And then, lo and behold, a husband had appeared on the scene. The marquis had never dreamt that there was a Mr. Hobbs; he was a very innocent marquis. He was also a Frenchman and a gentleman; he persisted in his suit.

Mr. Hobbs did not demand pistols for two. He was an artist—somebody that woman had raked out of the gutter presumably—and he did a sketch of the marquis, a caricature in the act of proposing, that amused Helen. She never could see the marquis afterwards without remembering it, and beginning to laugh. Once he had to leave his box at the theatre before she could continue her performance. It made a great deal of talk, more trying to the proud old French family than marriage would have been. The chivalric note was so lacking. There was only one thing left the marquis, everybody felt —as he did himself apparently.

The episode did a great deal to advertise Mr. Hobbs' art. A book of his drawings called "Hobbies" was published and sold big on both sides of the Atlantic. It went far in paying off the enormous debts Helen had contracted on the Rue de la Paix for those trifles she could not live without. She wouldn't know how to do it, she said, and her plea to the *Times* and *Tribune* on the subject sounded a delicate, wistful note. Indeed, how *could* she know?

THE HUMAN BRAIN

By Eugene Lyons

THE most consummately wonderful mechanism in the cosmos is the human brain. The product of a million years' evolution, it transcends even the dreams of the gods in power and intricate delicacy. It is finely balanced and capable of a range of activities without parallel in all the immensity of space and spirit.

Not only can it generalize, thus injecting symphony into life's orchestration. Even more overwhelmingly admirable is its power to differentiate, its sensitiveness to fine shades of sense impressions. The slightest nuance in visual or phonic or tactual tone it detects with a sureness that sets man apart from the brute. When a brain is in operation, all the angels stand at awed attention and watch.

"Lo and behold, ye heavenly hosts—the Master's handiwork is as wonderful as the Master. Observe the brain of that human speck down yonder. The product of an eternity's nurturing he is applying to his task. The godlike capacity to judge accurately, to synthesize and to analyze, he is focusing upon his work. Great are the conquests of the human mind."

And, all unaware, Gus Simpson continues his concentrated thinking: He is choosing a necktie.

MI-CARÊME

By Charles Divine

SEEKING, seeking goes the world,
Dreams and gifts and laughter;
And some are idling in the crowd,
And only follow after.

White masque, pink masque . . .
Carnival is dawning,
But half the clowns are sipping drinks
Underneath the awning.

White masque, pink masque . . .
Here a turban flashes;
A rag-picker is at the curb,
Seeking gold in ashes.

THE DARDANELLES PUFF-BOX

(A ONE-ACT PLAY)

By J. R. Milne

THE scene is the library of a Long Island country house. It might just as well be laid in New Jersey, but Long Island seems to be preferred these days. The walls are lined with built-in book-cases, broken only by a window—French variety—a wall safe, and one door. There should have been two doors, but the foot-lights were in the way. It is eleven-thirty by the clock on the table, which, by the way—the clock, I mean—is too small to be read at a distance. However, this detail has nothing to do with the plot. The table is one of the sort that the conspirators, or the board of directors, sit at in movie plays. There are the usual chairs, scattered hither and yon.

The door opens, and a woman enters. In morning—, street—, or evening-dress she might admit twenty-five years. In her present garb—kimono, or something of that kind—she can't be more than eighteen. Of course, evening faces are different from morning ones. . . .

Her pink slippers glide noiselessly across the floor. She kneels before the safe, and works the combination-knob a few times. The lines between her eyes show that she is annoyed. She is thinking. She tries again. While she is thus employed, the door opens, and a young man enters. He is in ordinary street dress. He contemplates her for a moment, amusedly, and then closes the door and walks to her side. She is startled, naturally, but recovers her composure quickly.

YOUNG MAN

What's the idea, Grace?

GRACE

(*Pettishly.*) I'm trying to open this thing, of course.

YOUNG MAN

(*Nodding wisely.*) I almost guessed that. (*He seems puzzled.*) Everybody in bed so early?

GRACE

(*Returning her attention to the safe.*) Yes. There was nothing else to do. Besides, everybody is just Ethel Channing and my husband. The others won't be here till to-morrow. How's it happen you've come to-night, George?

GEORGE

Motored out. Hot in town. (*Kneeling by her side, and gazing at the knob.*) Do you know what you're trying to do, Grace? I mean, do you know the combination?

GRACE

(*A bit forlornly.*) I'm afraid I've forgotten it. But . . . (*hopefully*) I'm almost sure it begins with seven . . .

GEORGE

That's interesting. . . . (*Rising to his feet.*) Sit down, and tell me about it. Perhaps I can help.

GRACE

(*Allowing herself to be thrust into a chair.*) It's Ethel Channing, the hateful thing!

GEORGE

(*Aroused.*) Hateful thing? What have you women been fighting about?

GRACE

Ssshhh! Not so loud, George. You'll wake Harry. And we haven't been fighting.

GEORGE

Then what the devil . . .?

(He opens his cigarette case, and busies himself with a match.)

GRACE

(Discovering a handkerchief from somewhere in the folds of her attire, and making use of it as a blotter.) It's all on account of the vanity case you gave me . . . that jewelled Turkish thing . . .

GEORGE

(Very much in the dark.) Don't you like it? Are you ashamed of it . . . or anything? . . .

GRACE

Don't be so stupid! Ethel was with you when you bought it.

GEORGE

(Grinning reminiscently.) Yeh; and she rather wanted it herself. What are you crying about? *(This last in sudden alarm.)*

GRACE

Harry is so jealous . . .

GEORGE

(Endeavouring to be gallant.) I don't blame him.

GRACE

(Furiously.) What do you mean?

GEORGE

Why, of course . . . Well, any man with a wife as beautiful as you would be jealous. It's his duty. *(Then carelessly.)* You can't very well blame Harry.

GRACE

I'm not blaming Harry. I love him. *(She becomes mollified and venomous.)* But Ethel, the hateful thing!

GEORGE

(Bewildered.) That's the second time you've called her hateful. What has she done to you?

GRACE

Nothing . . . yet. It's what she *will* do.

(She wipes her eyes despairingly.)

GEORGE

(Slightly relieved.) Oh, I wouldn't worry.

(He rises and begins pacing the room, cautiously steering his course from the safe.)

GRACE

(Musingly.) If Harry only hadn't that awful mania for showing my jewels . . .

GEORGE

(Seeing the plot untangle.) Oh-h-h! Harry will show the jewels. . . . And then, what?

GRACE

Ethel will be sure to speak about your giving me the case, and then . . .

(She makes an expressive gesture.)

GEORGE

Well, what then?

(He stops his rambling, and seats himself uncomfortably on the corner of the table.)

GRACE

(Sadly.) Why, Harry will begin to think all ~~*binds*~~ of things. He's so jealous. . . .

GEORGE

(Glancing at her curiously.) Didn't you tell him that I gave it to you?

GRACE

An expensive present like that? Of course not.

(George wilts before her surprised eyes. He inhales his cigarette before continuing.)

GEORGE

How did you account for it?

GRACE

(*Blushing guiltily.*) I gave the credit to Uncle Mack. I didn't think you'd mind so very much. . . . He's dead now, and can't argue. (*Rising, and going to the safe.*) And now I've got to open this awful thing. Why did you ever give me that beastly case?

(*He feels rather small and inconsequential. The gratitude of these women!*)

GEORGE

(*Following her.*) It's no use, Grace. You can't do it unless you know how.

GRACE

Then you try.

(*She retreats to allow him room.* GEORGE *obediently grasps the knob gingerly. He plays with it for several seconds. Then he affects the professional, and places his ear to hear the tumblers fall. Evidently the hearing does him little good, for he raises his head, and twists the knob back and forth half-heartedly.*)

GEORGE

I never studied burglary.

(*He is rather sullen. He gets to his feet, and shakes the cramp out of his legs.*)

GRACE

(*Severely.*) You must persevere.

GEORGE

Be reasonable, Grace!

(*He puts his hands on her shoulders soothingly.*)

GRACE

(*Shrilly, dramatically.*) Take your hands off me! I'm a married woman!

(*Astounded, he falls back to a safe distance.*)

GEORGE

Thank God. . . . (*He debates whether he had better leave her to her troubles.*) Just wait till to-morrow, Grace. . . . I'm sure . . .

GRACE

Of course you're sure. Harry won't be angry at *you* when he hears about the case. It's always the poor woman. . . . (*Shaking her head emphatically.*) No! (*Steps are heard. She turns to him, frightened.*) You must go, quickly. . . . Someone is coming. Through the window. . . . Hurry! Hide on the piazza. . . .

GEORGE

(*Dubiously.*) Hadn't you better go? I'm dressed, you see, while you . . .

GRACE

(*Pushing him out.*) And wouldn't it be splendid if I were found on the piazza, this way! . . . Hurry!

(GEORGE *exits clumsily. She runs to the table and snatches up a book. It is a copy of Taussig. The door opens. She looks up from her book, affecting unconcern. The newcomer is as lavishly clothed as herself.* GRACE *feels herself upon a plane of equality.*)

GRACE

Hello, Ethel. Searching for romance? . . .

ETHEL

(*Smiling.*) I thought I heard voices. . . .

(*She glances about the room. Then she notices the open window. She looks at* GRACE *knowingly, and seats herself.*)

GRACE

Couldn't you sleep, dear?

ETHEL

(*Sighing.*) It's the heat. . . .

GEORGE

(*Whispering involuntarily.*) Damn the heat!

ETHEL

Did you speak, Grace?

GRACE

(*Her lips twitching nervously.*) Certainly not. You were speaking of the heat. . . .

ETHEL

Yes. . . . I thought, since everyone was in bed, that I might sit for a while on the piazza. . . .

GRACE

(*In a panic, but striving to control her voice.*) Why don't you, dear?

ETHEL

(*Peering at the title of the book lying open on the table.*) That's a strange subject for you to study . . . Especially so late at night.

GRACE

It does seem queer, doesn't it. But I decided that as Harry's wife I should learn how to manage a household. And, like you, I couldn't sleep. . . .

ETHEL

(*Laughing pedantically.*) I'm afraid you won't find much information about the home in Taussig, my dear.

(GRACE *restrains a sudden intense desire to pull the other's hair.*)

GRACE

Can you recommend something to me?

ETHEL

(*Rising languidly, and moving to the door.*) Well, I think for you a good housekeper would be helpful. . . .

GRACE

(*Wishing that she were a daughter of the Borgias.*) Didn't you say you were going to sit on the piazza?

ETHEL

I wouldn't trouble you for worlds, dear.

(*She goes out, leaving* GRACE *to wonder just how much she knew, and to ponder over any possible double entendre. She goes to the window, and beckons to* GEORGE. *He enters dejectedly.*)

GEORGE

The beans are certainly spilled this time! I'm going to bed. . . .

GRACE

(*Grasping his arm authoritatively.*) You are *not.* You've got to stay and help me. The safe *must* be opened.

GEORGE

(*Abjectly.*) Won't you wait till tomorrow? Everything will be all right. . . .

GRACE

You must do it *now!* If Ethel ever saw that case, she would guess that it was you who was on the piazza tonight. As it is, my reputation with her has gone. . . . Why did you *speak?* She heard you.

(*He groans.*)

GEORGE

Just a minute. . . .

(*He goes to the door softly, and peeps out. He is apparently satisfied, and retraces his steps.*)

GRACE

Now, get busy.

GEORGE

But I can't open it without the combination. Have you ever seen Harry with anything that looked as if it might be it? . . . Written on paper, I mean.

GRACE

(*With a woman's hope in an emergency.*) It might be in the table.

(*She opens the drawer and digs over the contents. He watches her. Although disgusted, he cannot restrain a laugh.*)

GEORGE

Do you think Harry would be likely to put it there for any thief to find at convenience?

GRACE

(*Uttering a little cry.*) Here it is!

(*He stretches out his hand eagerly. He snorts.*)

GEORGE

East, nine by seven; South, ten by fifteen. . . .

GRACE

Come!

(*She pulls his arm.*)

GEORGE

It's only some of your husband's architectural figurings.

GRACE

(*Her face woebegone.*) Then we're just where we started. . . . Isn't there *any* way you can open it without the combination?

GEORGE

(*Sarcastically.*) If I had a diamond drill, and a fuse, and some nitro-glycerine I might coax it open. . . . Those are some of the things that magazine burglars use.

GRACE

(*Far too obsessed with her desire to see any humour in the situation.*) I haven't any nitro-glycerine; but I could get some gas from the garage. Would that do? Perhaps we could find a drill there, too. . . .

GEORGE

It's impossible, I tell you. And you'd better get to bed before another explorer gets us compromised.

(*She suffers a loss of dignity by plumping down into a chair.*)

GRACE

(*Bursting into tears.*) You're so dismal . . . and unsympathetic. . . .

(GEORGE, *terrified, sits on the arm, and pats her soothingly but timidly. He remembers the previous rebuke.*)

GEORGE

There, there. . . .

GRACE

Couldn't we hire a professional burglar from the city?

GEORGE

They don't advertise as a rule.

(*She sobs, and he strokes her hair.*)

GRACE

I wish I'd married you instead of Harry. He's so jealous. . . .

(*The twistings of* GEORGE'S *face end in a grimace.* ETHEL *slips in through the window. She regards them grimly for a moment.*)

ETHEL

I thought this love affair was *fini*.

(*Both look up in consternation.* GEORGE, *petrified, remains seated on the arm of the chair.*)

GRACE

You hateful thing! You spy!

GEORGE

Stop it, Grace!

(*She subsides in fresh tears.*)

GRACE

Ohhhhh . . .!

ETHEL

I'm going to get a . . . a (*Her eyes clash with* GEORGE'S.) Anyway, I'm going to get one. . . . (*She is defiant.*)

GRACE

Go ahead and get one. I don't care. Get two if you want them. . . .

GEORGE

(*Earnestly.*) But, Ethel . . . You don't understand. We were just . . .

ETHEL

(*Interrupting testily.*) Don't whine, George. I don't like it. Still, I can't see why you chose the library. It would have been far more fitting . . . upstairs.

GRACE

Oh, dear . . .!

ETHEL

Now you're talking, lovey! Never dissimulate. And you really ought to kiss him now and then.

(*The door opens, and a weary figure in a dressing-gown slops in. His slippers are a trifle large. He smiles.*)

ETHEL

Why, Harry!

HARRY

Thought I heard voices, and came to investigate. It's hot. . . .

GEORGE

Damn the heat!

HARRY

(*Noting the proximity of his wife and* GEORGE. *He probably glimpses her costume also.*) What the devil . . . Say, young man, you're in my place!

(GRACE *and* GEORGE *jump to their feet hastily.*)

ETHEL

It's quite all right, Harry. I just called Grace down to tell her . . .

(GRACE *runs to her husband.*)

GRACE

They're engaged, Harry dear.

(GEORGE *scowls;* ETHEL *frowns. They capitulate to her pleading eyes.*)

ETHEL

Well. . . .

HARRY

(*Giving* GEORGE *his hand.*) Congratulations, of course, old man. But why exclude me from the party?

GEORGE

(*Feebly.*) Oh, we were going to tell you, too. I thought you were asleep.

HARRY

I'm damned sleepy. . . . Guess I'll turn in again. 'Night.

(*The door closes behind him.* GRACE *gazes at* ETHEL *wretchedly, and then lowers her eyes.*)

ETHEL

So I'm a hateful thing! I don't seem to be very generous with my hate. . . .

GRACE

It *was* an *awful* thing to do. . . . What *can* you do? Of course, engagements are often broken. . . .

ETHEL

(*Shrugging her shoulders.*) What were you two doing when I came first?

GEORGE

Trying to rob the safe.

ETHEL

(*Suspiciously.*) I may be dense tonight. . . .

GEORGE

So was I. But Grace was stubborn.

ETHEL

Is this an explanation?

GRACE

(*Laconical, since he has been tried too far.*) Safe; jealous husband; vanity case in safe; former lover's gift; attempted theft; all on account of fears of another woman. . . .

(*The door opens, and* HARRY *strides in, bearing a small casket.*)

HARRY

Thought you might like to see Grace's toys. Ethel . . .

GRACE

Oh, Harry! It's so late. . . . Ethel must be very tired. To-morrow . . .

(GEORGE *collapses into a chair. A whole night's work and worry with worse than no result!*)

HARRY

(*Crestfallen.*) Perhaps you are right. . . . Of course, she is too tired. . . .

(*He slides out with the box under his arm.*)

GRACE

(*Gulping.*) I'm awfully sorry, George. I've made an awful mess of things. . . . I've been so foolish. . . .

ETHEL

(*Bitterly.*) And you've spoiled my night. . . .

GRACE

Spoiled your night? I know it's been very annoying . . .

ETHEL

We'd planned to give your morals such a shock to-morrow morning. And engaged people can't sleep in the same room. . . . It isn't customary. . . .

GRACE

You're married!

(GEORGE *nods, but remains discreetly silent.*)

ETHEL

Yes; we're married. And we'll have to postpone the announcement for another day to save your skin. I'm a hateful thing!

GRACE

(*Hugging her.*) You're splendid! But why didn't you tell me, George? It would have prevented this mix-up.

GEORGE

(*Moodily.*) Ethel and I agreed to say nothing till to-morrow morning—this morning, I mean. We wanted to shock the whole house. They wouldn't know, you see. But it doesn't make much difference, since nobody's here yet.

GRACE

(*Winking at* ETHEL.) But you know, your room is next to George's. And there's a balcony. . . .

ETHEL

Thank you, dearie. I am not without my own resources. . . .

(GEORGE *rises, and* GRACE *senses a hint.*)

GRACE

Good night. . . . (*Hesitating at the door.*) The vanity case will be your wedding present, Ethel.

ETHEL

(*Approaching* GEORGE.) Thank you, dear. I was going to suggest that myself. It would be such a dear present. . . .

(GRACE *fidgets at the door, blinks nervously at the preoccupied couple, and flees.*)

CURTAIN

MEN are to be classified according to their intelligence. Women according to the intelligence of the men they appeal to.

A MAN'S pleasantest memory is usually something that some woman or other is trying to forget.

A WOMAN who is the cynosure of all eyes soon or late becomes the cynosure of all ears.

DILEMMA

By J. K. Nicholson

HE stood patiently beside her awaiting her decision. In one end of the room an orchestra was playing softly . . . a lovely sensuous waltz. He glanced furtively down into her dainty countenance and something akin to pity stole over him as he read the unveiled perplexity there. How well he knew the problem which confronted her. So many times in similar situations he had witnessed the same struggle. Nor did he make an effort to influence her choice. To her he seemed so big, so suave, so imperturbable. Humbly she sensed his superiority. Her little heart beat fast as she felt herself the object of his cool scrutiny. With embarrassment born of hesitation she started to speak, then changed her mind. . . . At last she pointed a well-manicured finger at the most poisonous-looking French pastry on the tray, and the waiter deftly lifted it to her plate with a fork.

THE TREAD OF PAN

By Harold Crawford Stearns

IF you find a daffodil
Bobbing in the sun,
If you see a silver rill
Faster, faster run.

If you hear sweet echoing
At the break o' day,
You will know Pan's frolicking
Not so far away!

ALIMONY is the payment a man makes on his liberty bond.

PANDORA

By Edith Chapman

I

MRS. RANDOLPH led her sister into her bedroom, where the lighted lamps gave a suggestion of warmth to the otherwise cold ivory and mauve. The lavender chintzes became almost rose colour, the gray walls less opaque. This warmth was reflected also on to the lovely, restless faces of the two women, gilding the pallor of the one, softening the other. Lucy began fumbling with her sister's coat, burying her fingers in the fur of it, and tugging childishly at the heavy buttons. "Gail darling, how good you look. No, don't frown. I *shall* be extravagant if I want to."

By way of response Gail pulled the fumbling fingers down from her neck, and lifting her sister in her strong, thin arms, carried her across the room to a chair in front of the fireplace. Then she stood opposite her, laughing a little. "You weigh as much as a ten-year-old child." She threw off her coat and unpinned her hat and veil. "I should have been a man, Lucy. I'm too energetic for a woman."

"Yes, you *are* rather vital. Sit down, do. You make me nervous prowling about. And tell me how you like my dress."

Gail raised her lorgnon. It was this lorgnon, among other things, that set people by the ears. They counted it as by no means the least offensive of her outrageous mannerisms. Lucy was in the habit of defending her sister in public, and half agreeing, in private, with the defamers of what she regarded as the other's quite superfluous affectations.

"Don't stare at me through that thing; I'm not Mrs. Pierpont Faxton."

Gail paid no attention. "That dress isn't new, is it? I've certainly seen it before."

"You've never seen it before. It came from Lucile's this morning."

"Well, then, you've had another dress just like it. When, Lucy? Don't be a little devil. Tell me."

The lorgnon fell from her hands. She slipped them into the pockets of her skirt and stood scowling and biting her lips. Suddenly the scowl lifted. "I've got it! Long gilt mirror; gray high-waisted, crêpe de chine dress; Ivan Trekoff blinking in front of it."

The words were sharply cut off as Lucy's hand leapt out and covered her mouth. "Hush; George!" And she pointed through the open door to the room across the way.

Gail nodded and studied the opposite door.

"It's rather a poor fire you have there," she muttered.

Then, in a louder voice, "George, are you there? Come in here a minute, will you? Lucy and I want a man's service."

Her brother-in-law, tall, thin, supercilious, answered the summons. He lifted the wood as directed, made some appropriate allusion to Gail's arrival and was about to leave the room as stiffly as he had come, with no apparent recognition of the fact of his wife's presence among them, when Gail detained him.

"What's your hurry? I haven't seen you for more than two weeks. How do you happen to be home to-day? Are you ill?"

"A touch of the grippe." Randolph

leaned against the doorway, and stared imperviously at his sister-in-law. All this time his wife's eyes had never left him. They were fastened on him in a piteous, agonized scrutiny.

"Why don't you sit down?" she urged, and her voice, which she tried to make matter-of-fact, quavered and threatened to break. "I was going to ring for tea in a minute anyway. We can just as well have it now."

"Not on my account. I don't want any tea. And you'll enjoy it much better without a gross male about. You must have all sorts of things to say to each other." He still continued to ignore his wife, and to address his remarks to Gail.

The latter nodded briskly, seeming to consent to his view of it. "Yes, after all, tea in a boudoir isn't exactly your note, is it, George? Now, with Trekoff, on the other hand . . ."

"Might I ask who *is* Trekoff?" The words came, very carefully modulated. Nothing betrayed the man's interest except the quivering of the little nervous muscles around his mouth.

"Oh, an old flame of mine. A Russian painter whom I came within an ace of marrying. Lucy and I were talking about it just before you came in. I was reminded of him by Lucy's dress. She had a gown like that the year Trekoff and I were seeing such a lot of each other. He liked it immensely, and used to beg her to wear it."

Gail paused a moment; she let her eyes wander from Randolph and acquire an intense, rather abstract expression.

Her voice, when she spoke again, was in the same manner subtle and detached. "Indeed, I've wondered a good many times since whether it wasn't Lucy whom he gradually grew to love, all the time that I thought, and even *he* thought, it was I . . . he liked that particular dress of hers because it made her look so childlike. That was his name for her, 'little child.' Only he said it in Russian always, a singularly beautiful word." Gail's eyes seemed to expand and to darken with reminiscence.

As Lucy had listened, her face had grown paler and more anxious than ever. It was only as her husband's short laugh rang out that the strained look disappeared.

"'Little child!' Well, I declare, he had her number. That's about what she is still. Eh, Lucy?" And then, as his wife's imploring eyes at last met and drew his, "An utterly irresistible child."

And with that he disappeared.

Lucy burst into tears.

"It's only nervousness," she explained, trying to smile. "It's the reaction. I'm so afraid of him when he gets jealous that way. He's so different; so savage."

Gail sat down beside her sister and gazed at the fire. "I flatter myself I extricated you rather cleverly. As regards Trekoff at least, George is completely and permanently bamboozled."

"Gail, you were wonderful. You sounded so convincing that I almost believed you myself. I wish I had your presence of mind."

"It isn't presence of mind, my dear. It's merely the technique of lying. For Heaven's sake, Lucy, why don't you cultivate that faculty a bit?"

"I suppose it's because I'm too stupid, or too cowardly, or both. I'm absolutely literal-minded. But you're different. . . . How did you dare, Gail, to go as near the truth as you did?"

"That 'dyedoslika' business you mean? That *was* a bit raw. But I couldn't resist that part of it. Trekoff's voice has been ringing in my ears ever since I first came in to-day and saw you in that gown. How that man loved you, Lucy! His was the kind that makes other men's look rather sick and homœopathic. I've sometimes wondered if you didn't make a mistake, after all. Haven't you ever been sorry you decided as you did?"

Lucy shook her head. "No, never. George has been the only one so far as I'm concerned. The first one, and the last one."

Gail looked up with an irritated frown.

"Oh, you're such a fool, Lucy, with your 'only ones.' Such a didactic little

fool. And your husband's another. Why should we have had to *lie?* When you knew Trekoff you hadn't even heard of George Randolph. By what right does a man appropriate a woman's past, as well as her present and future?"

Lucy's hands worried each other nervously. "Oh, it isn't a question of right. George admits the utter unreasonableness of it. He simply can't help it, that's all. However," more brightly, "it's blown over, this time, thanks to you."

"Yes, this time. But what about the next?"

"Oh, I shan't worry. Perhaps there won't be a next. And in the meantime, I'm so happy."

"Are you really happy?" Gail stared at her sister's little fretting hands.

The other leaned nearer as if not daring to trust to so great a distance what she had to say. Her white, kindled face was almost too intense. "I'm so happy that sometimes I'm afraid. It seems so extravagant, so—"

"Well, I wouldn't worry if I were you, not so long as he continues at regular intervals to make you suffer . . . You incorrigible Puritan."

Lucy didn't answer. The tears continued to well up into her eyes.

There came a moment when her sister could stand it no longer.

"Lucy, stop that weeping. It's setting me crazy. I'm not sympathizing with you at all. I'm simply watching every tear that trickles down your cheeks and storing it away as so much copy. That's the sordid, slavish kind of thing it is to write. . . . You're just a copyist, an exploiter."

Resolutely Lucy wiped her eyes. "I met Fred downtown yesterday. 'How is Gail?' I said. And at the very sound of your name he began to glisten with pride. He grinned that big sheepish grin of his. 'More wonderful and wiser than ever. She's been working day and night for about two weeks. Another masterpiece, I imagine.' And he glowed up to the roots of his hair. What is it that makes big men so pathetic, Gail? I just wanted to kiss him; he looked so big and innocent and devoted. You certainly can't complain of anything 'homœopathic' about *your* husband's love."

Gail rose and began pacing the room. "Oh, stop prattling about love."

She picked a book off the writing desk and read the title with a shrug of amazement.

"*Zarathustra!* Since when, Lucy, have you been exploring Nietzsche?"

"Since yesterday. Your esteemed Jewish friend, Mayer Weber, lent it to George. I was bored last night for something to read and I thought I'd try it."

"Well, how do you find it?"

"I like it," the other stammered, a little lamely. "I haven't got very far."

"Why did you call Mayer Weber *my* friend?"

"Can't I? To you? It isn't as if I'd said it to Fred."

"And if you had," Gail answered dryly, "no harm would have been done. Fred isn't George. He wouldn't be in the least disturbed."

"No, I forgot how lucky you are."

"Lucky!" The word clicked with a sharp disagreeable ring. "Lucky? You mean that Fred isn't jealous? Do you mean to tell me that you aren't really awfully pleased with the idea that George cares enough about you to be jealous of you? Even if sometimes the result is a little uncomfortable?"

Lucy a little bashfully groped for her sister's hand, and then, thinking better of it, leaned back again.

"Gail, if George could trust me the way Fred trusts you it would be the only thing lacking to make me utterly happy. I love my husband so much and I believe so in his love for me that I accept its real limitation. But I suffer. It's so degrading, jealousy." She paused to control her voice. "You don't know how thankful I've always been for you that Fred was different in that respect. You couldn't submit to it as I do. You'd fight it, I'm afraid, even at the cost of your happiness."

Gail didn't answer. Instead she

turned the pages of the book back to where the owner's signature was written on the fly-leaf.

"Tell me," she asked moodily, "what does your husband think of Mayer Weber?"

"He thinks he's altogether too much in love with you."

Gail's eyes glinted. "Did he say so?"

"Yes; do you mind?"

"No, I don't mind; neither George's saying it, nor Weber's being."

"Gail dear, don't talk like that. Of course you don't mean it, but—"

"How do you know what I mean? It *doesn't* matter to me. That doesn't need to imply that I'm in love with him. As a matter of fact I can't *bear* him. He's too conceited—and *too* thin."

"Gail."

"Lucy." The edge of defiance sharpened in the other's voice. "His too thinness is a very important factor. If he weren't so thin and so pale and so generally theatrical looking, Fred's honour might be in danger. You can't tell."

"You talk like a fool. I don't see how you can talk that way, even in fun. It's so cheap, and so rotten bad to Fred. Sometimes I wonder if you half appreciate him?"

"Probably not. Do you also wonder whether *he* appreciates *me?*"

"Well, he certainly treats you as though he did. Trusts you absolutely. Wants you to lead your own life. Gives you absolute freedom."

"Freedom!" Gail laughed. "Well, what's the use of freedom if you can't use it, test it out, find out what it will do?"

She picked up her hat and began pinning it on in front of the mirror, hardly looking at herself as she pinned. As she turned back to her sister, it was to have her eyes held by the other's solemn staring gaze.

"Don't you love Fred?"

"Love? There you go again." Then, more sharply, "Yes, I love him. But does he love me? That's what I want to know."

"And how do you propose to find out? By experimenting with it until you *kill* it?"

She laid a light hand on her sister's coat. "Be patient, Gail," she whispered. "The way to find out isn't always to go prodding and slashing. A human emotion is very sensitive; sometimes if you just touch it, you bruise it and it dies."

II

FRED HUNTER unlocked the front door as the big clock in the hall struck eleven. He found his wife asleep on the couch, the book she had been reading sprawling on the floor beside her, some of its pages bent under, just as it had fallen from her hand. Her black hair had come unfastened, and hung back from her forehead and over the edge of the couch in straight, heavy masses. Her face was like a washed slate; all the lines of moodiness and fatigue had disappeared. She seemed to him perhaps more beautiful that way than any other. He woke her by lifting her into his arms.

"Fred, when did you come in? Is it late? Was I asleep?"

"Yes, it was cruel to wake you, I suppose." He looked remorsefully at his large, awkward hands.

Seeing this, she laughed. "Why, you blessed child, of course you should have waked me. I couldn't have stayed here all night in any event. But tell me about your meeting. Were you very brilliant? Were all those clever doctors awfully impressed?"

He sat down beside her and took her on to his lap. "I don't think I talked very well. Surgery isn't my line, you know. And I kept thinking of you."

"Of me?"

"Yes, of how much I'd rather be here. I hate it, Gail, when I have to go out in the evening. I still hate it, after all these years." He drew her hand into his and pulled out the long fingers.

"How silly you are! But it's very nice. After all, then, you *do* love me, don't you?"

"After all what?"

"Oh, I don't know." She laughed a

little choked laugh. "After all these years, I suppose."

They lapsed into a discussion of various intimate and household affairs. The man he had talked with after the meeting, their engagements for the coming week, an etching which she proposed to buy. It was only as they were on the point of going to bed that he drew a letter out of his pocket and handed it to her. "I almost forgot this. It's from Weber. He was at the meeting; he asked me to deliver it to you."

She opened it, read it, and then offered it to her husband. He took it and laid it quietly on the table.

"Why don't you read it?" she inquired. Her voice was almost querulous. "Aren't you even curious?"

"Not in the least."

She flung herself away from him with a restless, feverish movement. "I can't understand you at all. You know Weber likes me, likes me a lot, and yet you haven't the slightest interest in our relationship."

"Not the slightest. It's your affair, not mine."

"I *can't* understand you." She could only repeat her former statement with an added note of bewilderment. "You must be utterly different from most men—and *women*. I'm not like that, for example. If you got a letter from some other woman, I shouldn't ask to see it, but I should be dying to have you show it to me."

"That means you don't trust me, or my love for you. You don't believe in it."

"Oh, trust! Is anyone really trustworthy?" Her eyes grew subtle and almost unhealthy in their brilliance. "Fred, I *know* that Mayer Weber is in love with me. Don't you care?"

"No."

"Not even a little?"

"No."

"Why not?" It was the most she could do with it, for sheer irritation.

"I don't know. I suppose it's because it's so utterly natural that he should be—so inevitable, almost."

"And supposing I loved him? Wouldn't you mind that either?"

"Ah, that's different."

"Would that make you angry?"

"No, not angry. One isn't angry when one suffers. Besides, I shouldn't blame you; I should blame myself, that I hadn't been able to keep your love."

"Oh, you are impossible." Her frown stiffened for a moment and then relaxed into a smile. She came over to him and put her arms about him, nestling her head in his neck.

He patted the bowed head, holding her very closely.

"You silly child," he muttered. Then, whimsically, "Well, *do* you love Mayer Weber?"

"No, I don't. I can't bear him. But I almost wish I did, to spite you. Just to see what you would do."

"Let's stop talking about Weber, Gail. Let's forget everything except each other. You do love me, Gail?"

Slowly she relaxed in his arms. Her moody face grew tranquil. "You know I do."

"Then nothing else matters, does it, darling? Let's just be happy."

"So happy," she agreed.

And she held up her lips to be kissed.

III

WEBER sat opposite Gail and smiled into her scowling eyes.

It was another of those nights when Hunter had been called away. The room was lighted with lamps and candles. It was a cold night; there was a fire burning on the fireplace.

"So here we sit, silent as usual. It's a bad plan to be silent, Madame Gail. In the silence thoughts are apt to become audible. Haven't you sometimes found it so?"

As he finished speaking, he thrust closer to her his worn, thin face which looked wanner and uglier than ever.

Looking at it, she continued to scowl. The eyes were very good; large and dark, with that Oriental cast to them which gave the exotic note to an otherwise commonplace exterior; his nose

was decidedly aquiline; his lips were almost as pale as the rest of his face, and they quivered in a disagreeable, impotent manner. Brusquely she moved her chair farther off. "Don't be theatrical and don't talk any more in that weird, Freudian fashion."

"Why Freudian?" His instant accommodation might have filled her with misgiving on its own account.

"Oh, it had his omniscient note." She jerked her chair still farther off, and reached for a cigarette. He tried to light it for her, but she was ahead of him. With the cigarette between her teeth, she felt better; more removed and mistress of the situation. She stared at him and still scowled meditatively.

"Don't scowl so, Madame Gail. You are covering your forehead with ugly little marks like scars. You try to think too much. Do you know that ideas come more easily when you let them alone? You are apt, that way, to get a few really worth while; in place of all your cheap, quite obvious conclusions. After all, you know, your mind is distinctly commonplace. The stuff you write is the worst sort of dead-level mediocrity. Why don't you give up writing and rooting about so conscientiously among your little, middle-class ideas? There is something you could do infinitely better. You could be a very charming woman, if you'd let yourself. Why don't you relax for a bit and just drift?"

A slow deep flush had mounted in her cheeks. She hadn't the *sang-froid* for this sort of stinging personality.

However, at his last word, she managed a quick, ironic smile. "Drifting is so haphazard. I prefer to direct my movements."

"Are you sure of your competence to do so?"

"For practical purposes, yes."

"Well," Weber yawned, "I'm so glad you're not my wife. I don't like such competence in women. However, it might be very good for you."

"To be your wife?" She gave a contemptuous, insulting laugh.

"Yes. I should take you down a peg. I shouldn't allow you such an exalted opinion of yourself."

"How would you manage?"

"I might beat you." And he smiled insolently into her haughty, imperious face.

It was the look as much as the words which infuriated her.

"Beat me? Oh, no, you wouldn't; because you couldn't! You aren't man enough!"

This retort turned him as livid as though she had struck him. But he managed a smile. "I should certainly beat you if you said things like that to me."

The sight of him, wounded in his vanity, yet cringing and smiling, became intolerable to her. He was getting on her nerves. There was something about his very physical presence which struck her as morbid and unhealthy. Perhaps most of all she hated that perpetual smile which was almost, yet not quite, a sneer; with above it the solemn, profound misery of his eyes. She disliked his thin yellow hands. Suddenly she felt that she must be rid of him.

"Go away, Mayer; go home, please." The words were spoken almost without her consent. She trembled a little at their imperious frankness.

He arose with that languid indifference which she had once considered his charm. "You aren't in a very nice mood to-night."

"No," she agreed. "I'm horrid. And you seem to make me worse. That's why I want you to go."

Meantime she wondered how long he would continue to stand there, smiling and rubbing his hands. How revoltingly ineffectual he was; like a woman. Was it his being so ineffectual that made him, for all his affectation of insolence, so obsequious? She thought of her husband and wished he would come home.

She rose. "Please *go*." And playfully but firmly she pushed at him with her little, doubled fist.

"Yes, I'll go."

He still stood uncertainly.

Then, abruptly the smile vanished. His eyes grew narrower and denser

than she had ever seen them. "But not quite according to your plan."

He had her by the shoulders. His grip was surprisingly sinewy. His face was just above hers now, the thin pale lips threatening her mouth. Her eyes never left them, but riveted on them like a horror-stricken bird's. Her whole body grew rigid with loathing. That they should ever touch her became to her the most horrible thing that could happen in her life.

Just then a step sounded in the room and she was released.

"Fred," she groaned.

Her husband was standing near the large centre table. He had been in the room some seconds then, since he had had time to walk to the table from the door. How odd he looked!

"I beg pardon; I seemed to have interrupted." And he strode off into the library in the same moment that Weber slipped into the hall, where she heard him groping about for his coat and hat.

When the front door had finally closed she felt better. She studied the library door critically. She expected that in a few moments her husband would come out to her. After all there was nothing to be solemn about. It was *she*, if anyone, who was deserving of sympathy. . . . When a half hour and then an hour passed she crossed the room with quick nervous steps, and tried the handle of the door through which he had disappeared. It was unlocked. In response to her push it swung inward.

He was sitting at his desk, some papers spread out in front of him and his head supported on his left hand in the fashion in which he cupped it when he worked. At her entrance he glanced up.

"What do you want?" he inquired.

Then, as she simply stood, without answering, he rose and placed a chair for her.

She sat down in it perfunctorily.

"Fred, I want to explain. It was all such a silly mistake. You don't understand."

"I understand perfectly." He went back to his original place and for several moments no word was spoken. She studied his face, which was composed and inscrutable.

When she could bear it no longer she lunged again. "Won't you say something? Tell me at least what you are thinking, feeling."

"I'm not as interested in thoughts and feelings as you are. Nor do I feel the same compulsion to be always dissecting them."

It was the first time she had ever heard that precise, contemptuous note in his voice. She felt her body commencing to throb.

"You are angry with me?"

"No, I'm not in the least angry. Why do we have to discuss this thing, to-night?"

"Fred, you're so mistaken. What I told you a week ago is true. I *loathe* Mayer Weber."

"I imagine you do."

She took courage from this to go on, most convulsively. "Absolutely nothing occurred. You thought probably that we were flirting. But we weren't. I had even asked him to go. And then he tried to kiss me. But he didn't kiss me."

At this Hunter swung slowly around in his chair and let his quiet eyes rest on her. "No, I suppose not. Not while you could avoid it."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, the tactics of that kind of business is to get as near the danger line as possible, isn't it, and to remain yourself as virtuous and inviolate as ever? The same principle as the movies!"

"Fred!"

"Well, don't you agree that your policy is rather a dog-in-the-manger one?"

"Dog-in-the-manger?"

He was leaning back against his desk with his hands pressed hard against the edges of it. She could only stare at him with a stiff, crude intensity. He had never seemed so remote to her, nor so attractive.

"Come, Gail, let's be honest with each other. None of this is your fault. I'm not blaming you for anything. I only blame myself that I've been so

slow to admit what you've been so conscientiously trying to prove to me for several years."

"And that is—"

"That you're simply a sensationalist—understanding, in regard to any emotion, nothing but its most commonplace surface expressions. . . . Now, won't you please go away and let me work?"

This was the exact inflection she had used to Weber, an hour or so back, almost the same words. Could it be possible that in the last hour she had become loathsome to her husband in the same manner.

"Fred, don't you believe I love *you?*"

His big hands were in his lap now. He sat looking at them soberly. "What I believe is that you aren't capable of *loving* . . ."

She rose and left the room.

IV

THAT night she slept alone for the first time in the five years of her married life.

As she lay in the wide bed trying to sleep, and feeling very small and cold, there sprang into her mind one of her sister's few succinct observations, to which she had paid very little heed at the time. Something about a human emotion being so sensitive that if you merely touched it, you might bruise it so that it died. Did Lucy, then, know more than she did, for all her childish, literal outlook? . . . For, after all, Fred *had* loved her.

It was singular that in the first moment of really feeling sure of this, she was sure, also, of having killed it.

SURVIVAL

By Muna Lee

THERE would be no this year's flower there
If we went back;
They have ploughed the anemones and bluets under,
Wheat grows down to the track.

The stream is widened and dammed across,
There's a house on the hill.
There is nothing left of the spring we found there,
Wild and still.

It is all changed as you and I,
Changed and torn away—
But cool and fragrant and fresh as rain
Is the song I made that day!

A MAN never marries a woman with whom he can converse on a serious topic for over ten minutes.

AS WATER SPILLED ON THE GROUND

By Virginia Terhune Van de Water

I

WINIFRED KENT had often talked to her son about marriage. This evening she renewed the subject, giving it what she hoped was a tactful personal turn.

She believed in marriage as a woman does who has been a happy wife. She had been as nearly perfectly happy as it is possible for mortals to be.

"In spite of the agony of losing and missing, you still hold that it is better to have loved and lost than not to have loved?" Dick had asked her this evening.

"Yes," she answered decidedly. "I had over twenty years of marriage. I have had five years of widowhood—but through these last years I have had sweet memories to live upon."

"I call memories cold comfort," was the gloomy comment.

"But I have had *you*, too, dear," the woman said.

As the son made no reply, the mother looked at him solicitously. He was becoming morbid, she reflected. But she did not say it. A tendency to look on the dark side of life had grown upon Dick during the past few months. She could not understand his mental attitude—unless he was in love.

The pair were sitting in the living-room of their little apartment. The glow from a pink-shaded reading lamp made the room look warm. The night was bitterly cold and Dick had touched a match to the gas-logs as he and his mother entered the room after dinner.

"This is a poor substitute for an open fire," he had remarked, "but it is better than nothing. And if you do not look at the flames too closely, and if you have a good imagination, you can almost fancy you are in front of a real fireplace."

Then he had drawn his mother's favourite chair up to the apology for a hearth, and had seated himself on a cushion at her feet.

The pair had spent many an evening thus, discussing various matters. For they were great chums, this mother and her only child. She was the kind of woman that men love. She was essentially feminine. Not weakly—but gently, appealingly feminine.

She had married at eighteen. Now at forty-eight she looked ten years less than her age. Her light hair did not show the few gray strands scattered through it. Her eyes were dark and soft, her skin fair, her hands small and shapely.

She was the type of woman one seldom meets in these days of equal rights and equal responsibilities. She had always been taken care of. She had gone from her father's home to her husband, and when Richard Kent, Senior, after living right up to his comfortable income, died at fifty of heart disease, Richard Junior took up the burden which the husband had laid down.

Not that either man ever considered it a burden. Richard Kent had loved his wife with an absorbing affection and she had returned his devotion. It was his pride to provide her with such luxuries as his purse permitted. His only regret was that he could not surround her with all the beauties he felt she deserved. But he did what he could.

Because he did all that he could, and because he did not know he had a weak

heart, he died so suddenly that he was spared the anguish of appreciating that he was leaving his wife unprovided for. Had he comprehended the truth, the thought of his son would have been his only comfort. For Dick could be trusted to look out for his mother.

He had looked out for her as tenderly and devotedly as even his father could have wished. The son had a good position and the mother welcomed eagerly his suggestion that he and she move into a smaller and less expensive apartment than that in which they had lived until her husband's death.

"You see," Dick explained, "while I have a fair income for a chap of my years, it is not what Dad's was, by a long sight. But I am thankful and proud that it is enough to enable me to shield you and support you, dear little mother. Perhaps some day I may be prosperous enough to give you such a home as this."

She had put her arms about his neck and laid her head on his shoulder.

"I am glad to move," she said tremulously. "I could not endure living here without—him."

She had tried to hide her tears, but her son saw them and kissed them away.

His heart ached with pity for her. He understood so well what she had lost, for he knew what a husband his father had been.

His parents had married for love—and their love had increased with each year they were together. Had the son not seen all this for himself, what his mother had told him would have given him a high ideal of marriage. From the time he was a mere lad she had told him that a loveless marriage was a sin. Now that his father was gone, she spoke of him as a girl would speak of her lover.

Dick Kent had lofty standards—all of them, he declared, the outcome of his mother's teachings. She had been his confidante.

Until lately. To-night, sitting beside him in front of the blazing gas-logs, she appreciated, with a shudder of apprehension, that for weeks past the lad had been not only morbid, but reticent.

There was some reason for this. Was he in love?

That she loved him better than herself was proved by the fact that in asking this question she did not consider that his affection for another woman might come between him and her.

"Darling," she said, stroking the curly head at her knee, "I wish I could make you happy always."

He caught her hand and pressed it to his lips, and she felt his deep sigh.

"Even you could not do that," he rejoined. "Unfortunately, nobody can make another happy, no matter how much one may long to."

"I don't agree with you," she differed. "A husband can make his wife happy—a wife can make her husband happy."

"Not always," he insisted. "You judge of marriage from your own experience. There are other kinds than yours."

"I know there are, dear," she admitted. "But I hope yours will not be that kind—when you do find the right girl."

"It wouldn't do much good to find her," he muttered.

Then she summoned all her courage to say what was in her heart.

"Perhaps you have met her, darling."

He laughed, but the laugh did not ring true, and the mother heard the false note.

"It's a mistake nowadays for a man with a moderate income to meet the girl he would like to marry," he remarked. "It costs too much to keep a wife."

"Any woman who loved you would be willing to marry you on your present income," the mother argued. "You have more than your father and I had when we began our wedded life."

"Times were different then," he reminded her.

"Yes—but we had a much smaller income than yours. Dear, you have an exaggerated idea of what a girl would expect. She would certainly be willing

to begin on the same scale on which we are now living."

There was a long silence before the man spoke. "Well, it can't be—so let's not talk about it."

But the mother could not let the matter drop here. She knew now that she had been right in suspecting that her son was in love. And he was unhappy too. She had always been able to help him bear his troubles. She must help him now.

"Dick," lifting his head from her knee with tender firmness and turning his face so that she could look into his eyes—"tell your old mother all about it."

His avoidance of her direct gaze confirmed her in her suspicions.

"Dick," she accused, "you are in love,—and you have tried to keep me from finding it out. Did you fancy I would mind? Why, Son, I am glad for you."

He jerked his head away, and stood up.

"You needn't be glad for me," he said almost roughly. "Nothing will come of it."

"She does not love you?" she exclaimed. "I cannot believe it!"

In spite of his depression, the young man laughed.

"Mother, dear, you speak as if not to love me would be absolutely impossible," he teased. "You forget that all the world does not see me with your eyes."

She smiled at his badinage, then grew sober. "But, dear lad, even if she does not love you now, she will learn to. And," tentatively, "if it is the girl I think, she cares for you already—unless I am not a good reader of feminine nature."

"Don't!" the exclamation was almost sharp. "What's the good of talking about all this, Mother? I cannot marry for years to come, unless," with a disdainful curl of the lip, "I marry money."

Winifred Kent raised a protesting hand.

"Please don't jest about that kind of thing," she begged. "You know what I think of marrying for money."

"I was only joking," he declared. "Why take it seriously?"

"Because I feel so strongly about it," she explained. "But there is no need to repeat my views on that subject. You know them already."

"Yes, dear, I do," he said. "Because I do know those views, and because I agree with them entirely, there is no danger of my marrying a woman I do not love. And, with my present income, there is no chance of my marrying at all. Now, let us change the subject."

II

She understood her son too well to pursue the topic. When he took that tone, it meant that he had reached a decision from which he would not be shaken.

He went out soon after this. She wondered if he were going to call on Ruth Bartlett. For she was the girl she had in mind in talking to Dick.

She was a pretty creature, and Winifred had always admired her, while she had stood a little bit in awe of her—for she was a very capable young person. She had just been graduated from Barnard College, and she and Dick had been good friends for several years.

Ruth Bartlett was not the kind of girl to accept a man's attentions if she did not like him. Of late, when Mrs. Kent had been in company with the pair, she had fancied she detected in the girl a consciousness of Richard's presence, a gentleness towards him that had heretofore been lacking. Was her heart at last touched?

The mother did not find it hard to answer that question in the affirmative. Her son had not been far wrong when he had suggested that she could not believe that a girl could resist falling in love with him.

Then why might he not marry? Ruth was too sensible a person to expect to live luxuriously for the first few years after her marriage. Nor had she been in the habit of living luxuriously in her own home. Her people were in fairly comfortable circumstances. They were

not rich enough to spoil their daughter. Winifred was glad that this was the case.

There was a mistake somewhere. If so, it must be righted. Dick's happiness was at stake. She must think this thing out and try to rectify it.

She had not been accustomed to taking the initiative. She had always been a dependent sort of woman. But her mother-love was stronger than her diffidence.

Yet when, five minutes later, there was a ring at the doorbell and Frank Ogilvie was announced, she felt a sudden throb of relief. Here was an old friend, one to whom she could confide a part of the solicitude she felt with regard to Dick, one who could be trusted to keep her confidence. She was sure of Frank Ogilvie.

He had been in love with her for years. She had taken his devotion for granted when she was a girl. He was a dozen years older than she, and even after she had told him of her engagement to Richard Kent, he had remained her very good friend.

At the time of Richard's death Ogilvie had begged her to turn to him if there was any way in which he could help her. But he had not told her again of his undiminished love for her until three years later. Then he reminded her gently that his devotion to her had never wavered.

"You will always be the only woman in the world for me, Winifred," he had said. "I know you can never love me as you loved Richard. But won't you marry me?"

She had shrunk from him.

"Oh, no!" she had exclaimed. "A loveless marriage is a sin! If I married you without loving you, I would hate you. And a woman can only love once as I have loved."

Then she had broken down and sobbed, and he had asked her forgiveness. He had not meant to hurt her. It was not only his love that had prompted him to urge her to marry him—although that had been strong enough to make him run any risk to win her. But he knew he could supply her material needs and make her comfortable through the remainder of her days.

She had dried her tears when he said this, and her face had flushed.

"You mean to suggest," she asked indignantly, "that I would marry you because you happen to be rich?"

"No, no," he protested. "I do not mean that at all! I only mean that it troubles me to see you doing without things that I could give you, if I only had the right to."

That had been two years ago. He had not renewed the subject since then. But he had always been at her service.

So it was almost eagerly that she greeted him as he entered the room tonight.

"Oh, Frank," she said, "I am glad you have come! Sit down here—for I want to talk to you confidentially."

He did as she bade him and listened gravely to her story, nodding occasionally as she made some point she wished to emphasize particularly.

He did not interrupt her recital, but sat back, his eyes fixed upon the woman whom he had loved so long.

Even in the shaded and uncertain light, Frank Ogilvie looked his sixty years. He had spent most of his life earning money. He was, however, a lonely man. One may spend money upon one's friends, and give liberally to Charity and Causes, but these do not take the place of wife and children. They do not keep a man young.

Had Winifred married him he could have made her happy, he mused now as he gave one-half of his attention to her while the other half of his mind was busy with himself and his disappointments. How pretty she was! And, with a half-smile—how deliciously inconsequent!

For it was evident that she had not yet grasped the true reason why her boy could not marry. Must he tell her in plain English that her son could not afford to support both a wife and a mother?

Ogilvie drew his brows together at

the thought of thus hurting her. Yet he must say something.

For she had come to the end of her recital and was looking at him expectantly.

"Well?" she asked at last. "What do you think? Move so that I can see your face. That's better. Now tell me honestly—don't you think that Dick's viewpoint is wrong? Don't you think that he is making enough to marry on?"

The man cleared his throat.

"Well—that depends," he said lamely.

She looked disappointed. "But, Frank, surely what is good enough for a man's mother, is good enough for his wife."

"I agree with you entirely," he said promptly. "But perhaps he feels that all this"—with a wave of his hand about the little living-room—"is not really good enough for you, although it is the best he can do."

"It is lovely!" she declared. "Any mother ought to be glad to live as Dick and I do."

There was an awkward silence.

The woman turned impulsively to her companion.

"Frank," she demanded, "what are you thinking? I asked for your honest opinion. What is it?"

He hesitated.

"I would rather not give it," he demurred.

"I insist."

"Even if it hurts you?"

"Hurts me?" she asked quickly. Then, a light of comprehension dawning in her eyes—"you mean that—that—because of me—"

Ogilvie nodded.

"I mean," he began, but she interrupted him.

"You mean that I cost Dick so much that he—that he—can't marry?"

Again he nodded. He could not speak.

"But you do not understand," she hurried on. "I am the most economical housekeeper. I keep right within the allowance Dick gives me. And as to clothes—why—you do not know how little I spend for clothes. I really don't cost Dick much."

The man sprang to his feet. He longed to gather her in his arms.

"For Heaven's sake," he said hoarsely, "don't talk like that! I cannot stand it!

"Your son loves you. He counts it an honour to care for you. He always has. You have made him perfectly happy. Be content with that. Nobody else could have done for him what you have done."

"But," she said slowly, "it is I who am in the way of his marrying. Oh," with a catch in her breath, "I see it all now! How blind I have been! I have been a fool. I have taken all and given nothing. Richard—my husband—did everything for me, and I received it as my due. That was all right, for I was his wife, and a man should care for his wife. But my boy, my little laddie—to think that I have hung like a burden about his neck—just as I hung about my father's neck, I suppose, until I married.

"You see," she went on in spite of his effort to check her, "that was the way I was brought up. My mother and father had old-fashioned notions about girls. They never taught me to earn my living. Perhaps if I had not married when I was so young I might have had enough sense to learn to do something. As it was, Father handed me right over to Richard—and he—he—left me to Dick! Oh, it's horrible!"

She was walking up and down the room now. Frank Ogilvie stepped in front of her.

"Dear," he begged, "do not talk like this. Why, child, you are making a mountain of a mole-hill. Come here and sit down and let me talk to you."

She allowed him to lead her back to her chair, and he sat down near her.

"Now listen—you are possessed by an idea and have let it run away with your common sense," he said sternly. "In the first place, you do not know that Dick is in love."

"Yes, I do!" she affirmed. "I know my boy, I tell you. I have seen for

weeks that he was unhappy. Then all at once this evening I understood why."

"Well, and if he is—what then? He may be unhappy because the girl does not love him."

"I am very sure she does love him," the mother muttered.

"But you do not *know*," the man protested. "And until you do, how foolish of you to get all wrought up over a condition that may not exist at all."

"But if it does?" she demanded.

"Well, if it does—it may be that we are all wrong in imagining that Dick's income is not large enough—"

"But it is not!" she exclaimed. "He has talked of his business affairs to me. I mean he has told me just what he is able to pay for things. We live awfully close to what he makes. And I have taken it all for granted."

Again he checked her.

"Hold on! Steady!" he warned. "Don't let yourself go again."

"I must think it out," she pleaded. "I will admit that, as you suggest, I may be mistaken about the girl's love for Dick. But, supposing that it is all true—that he loves her, and she loves him, and they cannot afford to marry? Can't you see that I must do something?"

He did not reply, and she went on as if talking to herself.

"There ought to be some sort of work by which I could support myself. I might—"

"As if Dick would allow it!" the man broke in brusquely. "He would be a blackguard if he did—and he is not that."

"No—he is a hero, a martyr!" she retorted. "Oh, why am I not old enough for an old ladies' home!"

"Winifred!" the man caught her hands in his. "You are torturing me, talking like this! Dear, I promised never to annoy you again—but can't you see how I want you? Come to me—and make me the happiest man in the world."

She flung his hands away.

"Stop!" she commanded. "I have not yet sunk so low that I would marry a man for his money! I don't love you. I never can love you."

"But you like me," he pleaded. "I am satisfied with that. I will be very good to you, Winifred."

"Stop!" she ordered again. "I want to be alone. I must do something. I don't know what. You certainly have not helped me by any suggestion. I almost wish I had never told you this thing. And yet—what could I do?"

"Yes," he said gently, his manner changing suddenly, "what could you do? Forgive me if I have wounded you, dear. I was very tactless. My only excuse is that I love you. But I will not bother you with that. I will go away now. Good-night!"

He had reached the door when he looked back. Her slight drooping figure smote his heart. He returned to her side.

"Winifred," he said, "I have asked you to forgive me. But there is one thing more I must ask. It is this: If you want me—if you ever need me—will you try to remember then how much I love you? Will you promise?"

She looked at him for an instant, then her eyes fell.

"Yes," she murmured. "I promise."

III

SHE was lying awake in her darkened room when Dick came in two hours later. She spoke as he passed her door. She had determined upon what course to pursue if her suspicions were correct. But first she would make sure. She must be careful and tactful.

"Dick!" she called. "Come in and say good-night."

He did her bidding, groping across her room towards the bed.

"Do not turn on the light," she warned, "it hurts my eyes."

He sat on the edge of her bed and bent to kiss her.

"Where have you been?" she questioned with elaborate indifference.

"To the Bartletts.'" He, too, tried to make his tone casual, but succeeded as poorly as she had done.

"Was Ruth in?" she asked.

"Yes, she was in," he replied. "Good-night, little Mother. It's bed for mine. I'm as sleepy as a cat."

She held his head close, with her arms about his neck, when she had kissed him.

"Good-night, darling," she murmured. "Mother prays you may be happy."

Unconsciously she used the phraseology that she had used when he was a little boy and she was soothing him in childish troubles. She heard him swallow hard before answering.

"Thanks, Mother. But I guess that happiness is not the only essential to life."

"It is one of the essentials if it makes somebody else happy too," she retorted. "However, you must go to bed now, and to sleep too."

She lay still until the darkening of the transom in the room beyond her own told her that he had extinguished his light. After ten minutes, she crept softly across the passage between the two rooms and listened at the door.

She stood here so long that she was chilled through and her teeth chattered. But at last she heard the man move restlessly in his bed.

"Oh, Lord!" he muttered so loudly that the exclamation reached her ears. "Oh, Lord!"

She hurried back to bed and lay there shivering.

"I knew it! I knew it!" she said over and over.

Her fears were confirmed when, an hour later, she saw the transom of Dick's room illumined. Then she got up, and, donning her wrapper and slippers, went boldly across the passage and knocked at his door.

"Come in!" he called.

"I saw your light and wondered if you were not feeling well," she explained. "Can't you sleep, Son?"

"No, I can't, and I thought I would try to read until I got drowsy," he explained.

She did not remind him that he had said a while ago that he was sleepy. But she came to his bedside and laid a caressing hand on his forehead.

"That was how your father used to put himself to sleep," she remarked. "You are worrying about something, Dick."

"No," he denied, "at least—I have been thinking about business. But there's nothing to worry about, Mother—so please do stop fussing!"

His tone was impatient. He was seldom cross with her. And he did not often acknowledge that he was worried about anything. It was plain that she had caught him off his guard.

"All right, dear," she said. "I won't bother you."

Then she went back to her room and spent the remainder of the night deciding upon a course of action.

It was late the next afternoon that Winifred Kent called upon Mrs. Bartlett. She had owed her a call for some time, and would not have troubled herself to return it even now if to do this had not been a part of her scheme.

Mrs. Bartlett was out, the servant said, but Miss Bartlett was in.

"You will excuse me for asking for you, won't you, my dear?" Mrs. Kent said when Ruth came into the drawing-room. "I know it is expecting a good deal of you to come down to see an old lady"—with her light laugh—"but when I learned that your mother was out, and you in, I could not resist temptation."

The girl yielded to the gentle charm of voice and bearing and expressed herself as happy to see the caller.

Ruth Bartlett's face was pale and her eyes heavy. When Mrs. Kent commented on the fact that she looked tired, she admitted that she had not slept well last night. Then she flushed as she met the widow's kind gaze, and the tears came to her eyes.

Ruth Bartlett prided herself upon her self-control. Yet when, after a long chat, Winifred Kent took her departure, she had learned what she had come to ascertain—that Ruth loved Dick. But the girl did not know that she had revealed this by her

manner and reticences just as plainly as she might have done by speech.

A week later Winifred Kent told her son that she was going to marry Frank Ogilvie. She made this confession in the darkness of her own room, where she had summoned Dick when dinner was over. She could not see the look on his face, nor could he see that her hands were clasped tightly together.

He listened to what she had to say, but made no comment. When she could stand his silence no longer, she added what sounded almost like a plea for mercy.

"You see he has loved me for a long while, Dick. And he is no longer young. Neither am I. He needs me. You do not need me now."

He spoke stiffly, as if putting a great restraint upon himself.

"I have needed you very much, mother. But I do not want to put my claim before his."

She drew in her breath as if he had stabbed her.

"Nobody has any claim before yours, son," she said tremulously. "You will always come first."

"Until your marriage," he corrected. "However—" and she could fancy the proud lift of his head, "there is no use in discussing that. I hope"—with an effort—"that you will be very happy."

Then he kissed her on the forehead and started from the room.

"You are going out?" she asked.

"Yes," he replied. "I am going over to the Bartletts' for a while."

"Give Ruth my love," she said softly.

She did not know whether or not he heard her, for he made no reply.

IV

A MONTH passed before he announced to his mother his engagement to Ruth Bartlett. He tried to appear grateful as Winifred expressed her delight at the news. Ruth, too, was grateful and deferential when Mrs. Kent called to welcome her into the small family of which she was to be a part.

"She is a lovely girl," she said later to Dick. "I have always thought her pretty, but her happiness has made her beautiful. You have won a prize, my darling."

"I am glad you like her," he rejoined. "I would be sorry if my mother and future wife were not on friendly terms."

Friendly terms! The words were perfectly proper, and just what convention would have demanded. But Winifred's son and she had always been intimate. Now there was a barrier between them—a thin barrier—but the parent could not break it down.

There was nothing that she could lay hold of. She appreciated this as Dick rose to greet Frank Ogilvie, who entered the room for his evening call. Ogilvie came at the same hour every evening, and Dick always greeted him politely, with just the correct shade of cordiality. Then he made his adieus and went over to the Bartletts'.

When he had gone on this special evening, Winifred Kent voiced a little of what was in her mind.

"I do not quite understand Dick," she said. "I know he is happy, yet he is so different from what he used to be."

"He is engaged," was her betrothed's prompt rejoinder. "When a young chap falls in love, he has room for nobody else in his heart. Nor," with a smile, "has an old fellow like me room for anybody else. But, you know, dearest, there has never been anyone but you in my heart."

She did not return his caress, but submitted to it. She had schooled herself to do this.

During the three months that elapsed between Winifred Kent's engagement to Frank Ogilvie and her marriage to him, her son's manner to her was studiously polite, and conventionally affectionate. There was nothing that the mother could resent,

yet at times she felt that she must break down this invisible barrier between them or lose her mind. She had sacrificed so much to make him happy, and in doing so seemed to have placed herself at a distance from him. She could not tell him the truth, but surely the son who had been dearer than life itself to her must understand in some subtle way how deeply she loved him.

On the night before her marriage she made a stern resolve. She would have a plain talk with her boy. She had told Ogilvie not to come to her on this her last evening in the little home that she and Dick had shared. And her betrothed, always willing to do her bidding, had yielded to her wishes.

Thus it came about that she and her son were again alone together in the little living-room.

It was early spring now, but the air had a chill in it that, she declared, warranted the lighting of the gas-logs on the imitation hearth.

When Dick had touched a match to them, she sank into her armchair and laid a cushion at her feet, as had been her habit in the old days.

"Sit here, dear," she urged, motioning to the spot which had so often been his resting-place.

He hesitated for the fraction of a second, then obeyed. She laid a caressing hand on his head.

"It is like old times to be here alone with you, dear," she said fondly.

She hoped that he did not notice how cold her fingers were nor how they trembled.

"Yes," he said sombrely, "it is like old times."

The opportunity that she had sought had come more quickly than she had dared to hope. She had feared there would be long preliminaries before she would have a chance to speak of that which was harassing her.

"Darling," trying to steady her voice, "what is the matter?"

"What do you mean?" he parried.

"You know what I mean," she went on, her voice growing stronger. "For months past there has been something wrong."

"Have I not seemed happy?" he demanded. "If not, my actions do not betray my feelings. For I could never have believed that a man could be as happy in his engagement as I have been."

He was fencing, and she knew it. She could not stand this evasion.

"Dick," she said almost sternly, "I am not talking of your relations with Ruth, but of your feeling with regard to me. Do not make me remind you how close you and I have always been. I do not fancy that you have forgotten. I know I never can. Ever since your father,"—she paused a moment, for she felt her voice breaking, then she went on more firmly,—"ever since your father left me you have been everything to me. There never was a better, more unselfish son."

"I only did what it was my pleasure and duty to do," he said.

"But you did it so nobly, so generously. And you would have been willing to sacrifice your entire life for me."

"I never had the opportunity," he rejoined. "And if I had had, it would have been an honour to be allowed to do it. To sacrifice one's self may seem hard to the outsider. But to the man who does it, it must bring a wonderful sense of duty performed. The intolerable thing would be for a man to know that someone else was being sacrificed to bring him happiness. I would rather die than feel that."

"And yet," she broke in, "you just said you would have been glad to put me in that position,—to let me be the one to whom you made sacrifices."

"Ah," he argued, "that is different. You are my mother. It would have been my joy, as well as my privilege, to care for you. For, since you are speaking of what used to be,—I may remind you that you and I have been pretty close chums."

"Yes," she seized eagerly on his words,—"until lately, Dick. Oh, son, what has come between us? Please, if you love me, tell me the truth."

"You really want it, mother?"

"I really want it."

"I hate to say it," he began slowly, "but you insist. It makes me feel like a brute,—in a way. Yet the fault is not mine.

"You say that if I love you I must tell you the truth. I do love you. You know that."

"But not as you did?" Her question was scarcely more than a whisper.

He did not look up at her strained face, but kept his eyes fixed on the flickering gas-flames.

"I love you," he went on, "but, you know, mother, certain things have happened to my ideals. You want me to be frank, you know."

He paused.

"I do want you to be frank," she said. "Go on."

"Well, ever since I can remember anything I can remember the tenderness that existed between you and father. As I grew up, and went to other boys' homes, I realized that such love as yours and his was one of the most wonderful things in the world,—in fact, *the* most wonderful. You taught me that by your life and by your speech. I learned for myself what a man father was,—the best man, I really believe, who ever lived. And you always told me he was."

"He was," she agreed.

"You also told me," more slowly, as if it pained him to wound her, "that people who loved as you and he did could never love like that a second time. You also taught me that a marriage without that kind of love was a sin."

He stopped, but she did not speak.

"Can't you see, mother," he urged, "that I have had to readjust all my views? Until this past winter I thought of you as still married to my father, still loving him, only waiting until you could be with him in some other world, where you felt he still lived."

Again he paused.

"You did feel that, didn't you, mother?" he questioned.

"Yes."

"So it hurt me, horribly, to have you put someone else in my father's place. I know," he hurried on, "that Ogilvie is a good man,—as men go. But you must forgive me if I say that he could never be such a man as my father was,—no, not if he lived a thousand years. Oh,"—desperately, —"you have driven me to speaking the truth! I am saying that which you may resent."

"No," she said dully, "I do not resent it,—for it is true."

"You admit it!" he exclaimed, and there was a note of relief in his voice. "You do not love him as you did father?"

"Dick, Dick," she stammered, "no woman ever loves twice—"

"Then, in Heaven's name," he exclaimed, springing to his feet, "why do you marry him? But no!" with a passionate gesture,—"don't answer! I do not want to hear you say that you are marrying him because he could provide you with certain things that I could not supply. I could not stand hearing that,—from you!"

"Dick!" she begged, rising and putting her arms about his neck, "dear son,—please forgive me! You do not understand."

He looked sternly into her eyes.

"You are going to marry him tomorrow!" he accused.

She bowed her head mutely. He drew away from her.

"Don't you see what a mistake it has been for us to talk of this, mother? Ruth and I have puzzled over it,—for of course I talk to her of all that lies closest to my heart."

Winifred Kent threw out her arms as if warding off a blow.

"You—you have discussed it with —Ruth?" she breathed.

"Why, yes, mother, of course I have.

You see, she is all that really belongs to me now,—or that will belong to me after to-morrow."

The woman shivered slightly.

"Son," laying her hand timidly on his arm, "I am sorry I have disappointed you."

"Never mind, mother," he said, in a voice that he meant to make kind, "you have a right to live your life as you think best. And, you know, I have Ruth.

"But," with a glance at the clock, "I must go to her now. She will be wondering what is keeping me so late. It is a pity, dear, that you insisted on this conversation to-night. It was a mistake. It gets us nowhere. For I cannot understand, and"—looking at her keenly—"I suppose you cannot explain."

"No," she murmured, "I cannot explain."

He kissed her and left her standing alone in front of the imitation hearth-fire.

She stood listening until she heard the front door close behind him. Then, with a low moan, she sank into a great chair and buried her face in her hands.

For a long time she sat motionless. When at last she raised her head, her face was the face of an old woman.

For she knew now the bitterest pain of her life,—the pain of a woman who has sacrificed a dear ideal and lost her only son.

FRIENDSHIP

By T. F. Mitchell

I WILL always have a deep regard for Smith. It was Smith who was the cause of my happiest experience; it was Smith who introduced me to the most beautiful and most likable woman I have ever loved. One evening he said: "Meet Mrs. Smith, Bill."

A WOMAN of forty can forgive a young girl almost anything but the offer of a seat in the subway.

WE who have never plotted revolutions must look to women for our ecstatic moments.

CUT your friends from the hickory and your sweetheart from the rosebush.

ON THE SIXTH DAY

By Tom Ransford

GOD created a creature, beautiful, strong, and terrible, and He called it "man."

And He asked His creature: "Art thou satisfied?"

But the creature answered: "No!"

Then God asked: "What is it thou dost want?"

And the creature said: "I want a mirror to reflect my glory, a potion to fire my blood, a casket to receive my gifts, a pillow to rest upon when I am tired, a veil to hide behind when I am miserable, a puppet to play with, an idol to pray to, a muse to inspire me, a beacon to show the way—and a victim on whom to blame all my shortcomings . . ."

Then God created woman.

ESSAY IN THE SOCRATIC MANNER

By James Drake

I

WHO would be so foolish as to catch a beautiful woman in his arms when she pretends to stumble as he draws near her?

Who would be so stupid as to believe a woman when she says that the days have been as beautiful as the glint of an opal since he came into her life?

Who would be so weak as to be tempted when a woman peers at him through lowered lashes, lips apart?

Who would be so asinine as to pen *vers libre* to a woman with two husbands behind her?

Who would be so innocent as to follow a woman as she strolls across the pale rugs toward the deserted terrace?

II

Answer: No man—after the first time.

POMMIERS NORMANDS

By Yvonne Durand

"POUR dire qu'y a d' la pomme, on peut pas dire qu'y a d' la pomme. . . . Mais, pour dire qu'y a point d'pomme, on peut pas dire qu'y a point d'pomme."

Ainsi doit répondre un Normand, interrogé sur la récolte, si les ramures des vergers ploient sous le poids des fruits.

"On pouvait pas dire qu'y avait point d' pomme" dans le plant de César Bondaux. Et c'est ce que pensait le vieux, en étayant, aidé de son fils Saturnin, les branches trop chargées qui balayaient presque le chaume d'avoine.

Les deux hommes avaient profité d'une après-midi sèche et sereine, un dimanche, pour faire cette besogne, car tous deux étaient ouvriers-bourreliers, de leur état,—et possédaient seulement quelques lopins de terre, cultivés à moments perdus.

— Il faudra sacrificer une demi-journée pour venir fauler ce petit arbre-là, décida le père Bondaux. C'est de la pomme "éribe." Voilà qu'elle commence à tomber.

— Il y en a pas mal, remarqua Saturnin, en comptant du regard les balles d'or luisantes, parmi les feuilles déjà roussies et rares. Mais c'est les pommiers de carcasse qui donneront le plus. Je parie qu'on ramasse soixante-dix rasieres sous les trois.

— Il n'était que temps de les soulager, fit observer César, soulevant avec précaution, sur une perche fourchue, des rameaux où les pommes de carcasse, menues, étaient tassées comme les graine ambrés d'une grappe.

— Il y a de l'orgueil aussi, reprit Saturnin, hésitant . . . mais pas tellement, tout de même.

Les pommiers d'orgueil, moins étalés en ombelles que leurs voisins, ressemblaient à des rosiers pourpres, énormes et surabondamment fleuris. Le père et le fils, contents, remontérent dans la carriole, attlée d'un bidet, qui les conduisait d'ordinaire à leur travail, dans les villages ou les fermes éloignés.

Quand ils revinrent, pour récolter les pommes "éribes", c'est-à-dire hatives, la mère Bondaux les accompagnait.

— Crois-tu qu'elles ont augmenté? interrogea César, dont les petits yeux verts fouillaient avidement la ramure.

— Je ne pense pas, fit Saturnin, qui, le nez levé, tourmentait sa moustache rousse.

— Ah! dame, intervint la mère Clémentine avec un clignement de paupières, le plant du Bohémien n'est pas loin. . . . En allant voir si ses arbres, à lui, font bien. . . .

— Surtout qu'il y va voir au clair de lune . . . grommela Saturnin.

Le Bohémien—de son vrai nom Jules Pagnard—avait la réputation de ne rien laisser perdre, même le bien d'autrui, et de "rouler la brouette, la nuit" afin de corriger l'injustice du sort qui l'avait fait pauvre, à son gré, en jardins et en terre à blé.

* * * * *

—Dis donc, César, as-tu passé par notre plant, tantôt? demandait la mère Bondaux en posant la soupe sur la table.

— J'y ai passé, oui. C'est le tour des pommiers d'orgueil, à présent. Il

en manque bien une rasière et demi, déjà sur les deux.

— Bien! moi, j'ai vu le tas de pommes du Bohémien. Il entrait dans sa grange, pour tirer du cidre. Il n'a pas pu refermer la porte assez vite pour m'empêcher de jeter un coup d'œil. C'est bien lui qui nous vole, puisqu'il y a de l'orgueil dans son tas et qu'il n'en a pas un seul arbre.

— La lune est quasiment pleine. On ne raterait pas son coup de fusil, cette nuit, gronda Saturnin en regardant l'arme accrochée au-dessus de la cheminée.

— Tais-toi, mon garçon, tais-toi, souffla craintivement Clémentine, tu sais bien que la loi ne serait pas pour toi.

— Et qu'on ne risque pas de tuer un homme, pour du "fruitage", déclara Bondaux, l'air sévère.

— Alors, faut se laisser dévaliser?

— Je n'ai pas dit ça.

Bondaux réfléchit, puis reprit:

— Quand tu auras soupé, tu graisseras les roues des deux brouettes, de façon qu'elles ne chantent plus.

— Et puis, après?

— Après, mon garçon, moi je te montrerai se que tu devras faire.

Onze heures ayant sonné, les deux hommes s'en furent, marchant à la muette das les terres labourées, vers une petite "bossière" tout proche des deux plants. Tapis dans un taillis, ils attendirent.

Enfin, une grêle silhouette humaine se profila, venant à eux et menant une brouette, silencieuse autant que les leurs.

— Pourquoi ne m'as tu pas permis de prendre mon fusil? chuchota Saturnin.

Le Bohémien, sous le plant des Bondaux, cueillait les pommes d'orgueil qu'il fourrait dans un sac.

Lorsqu'il fut bien en train. César surgit du bois et, froissant bruyamment les chaumes, il gagna l'autre champ, où il se mit à dépouiller les branches basses d'un pommier de pigeon. Saturnin l'imita. Le Bohémien eut une hésitation brève . . . , puis il continua sa besogne.

Les trois sacs furent pleins à la fois.

— Bon! s'exclama le père Bondaux, voilà comme on travaille, au soleil des loups! . . . Nous avons fait erreur, Saturnin! . . . C'est les pommes du voisin que nous avons cueillies.

— Bah! . . . puisque le voisin avait fait erreur avant nous, il n'y a pas grand mal, riposta Saturnin.

Jules Pagnard désigna sa brouette chargée.

— Je n'ai qu'une rasière contre deux prononça-t-il, hardiment.

— Oui, mais, voilà! railla le père Bondaux. Ce n'est peut-être pas la première fois que tu te trompes, mon garçon?

— Ce qui est fait est fait, grommela le Bohémien.

Et les trois brouettes, de conserve, roulèrent vers le village.

* * * * *

Les Bondaux et le Bohémien n' avaient jamais pressé de meilleur cidre que cette année-là.

— J'ai des sauvabeons assez drus, que je voudrais greffer en pomme d'orgueil, dit Jules à César. Tu ne me refuseras pas des greffes?

— Moi? non, bien sûr! Pourvu que tu me laisses en couper quelques-unes sur ton beau pommier de pigeon. Moi aussi, j'ai des arbres à greffer, consentit César, sans rancune.

HANDSOME MEN

NOTHING so improves personal appearance as that slight smooth tan which comes with exposure to the sun and air.

"SUNBRONZE DE LUXE"

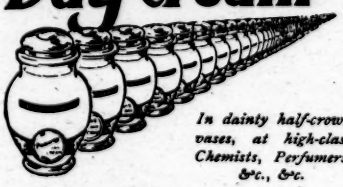
gives a perfect simulation of this tint, is **undetectable, perfectly harmless, and absolutely genuine,** to which its 5,000 testimonials received from every quarter of the globe is sufficient evidence. Unique in method and perfection of result, SUNBRONZE DE LUXE has stood the **TEST OF TIME.** Forwarded free from observation, price **10/6** (*Mark II de Luxe*, **3 guineas**). Fresh Complexion Tint for Ladies, on same principle, at same prices. Direct from

Sunbronze Laboratories, 157, Church St., Stoke Newington, London. (*Established* 1908.)

The Toilet Cream de Luxe

POMEROY DAY CREAM is, of all "vanishing" creams, the most delightful. It has a lovely effect on the skin and is so fragrant and refreshing that one wants to be using it always. Being non-greasy and vanishing it can be used any time, any day. The more one uses it, the better for the skin, which is rendered soft, smooth, and fresh, and is protected against wind and weather.

Pomeroy Day Cream



In dainty half-crown vases, at high-class Chemists, Perfumers, &c., &c.

MRS. POMEROY, LTD.
29, Old Bond Street, London, W.

GOWNS
LINGERIE
MILLINERY
BLOUSES

Brenda.

(Studies individuality carefully)

44 Upper Baker St. N.W.
Tel:- Mayfair 1091.

Gives a lather rich and lasting and a comfortable shave

PRICE'S REGINA SHAVING STICK

Price's, Battersea, S.W. 11.

ABOUT FASHIONS AND OTHER THINGS

By Various Hands

"Thoughts are things," we are told, and if this is the case there must be many cheery ones about to account for the galaxy of colour and beauty that meets our gaze whenever we elect to appear in any public place. Restaurants are a blaze of brilliance, and vie with what one reads of the past glories of Scheherazade and Haroun al Raschid. Dinner frocks are no longer conspicuous by their abnormal expanse of bare back and their very unveiled and often unalluring exhibition of ankles. On the contrary, soft illusive draperies, in all the shades of the tropical butterfly, shimmering with gold and silver, through which gleam dazzling white arms, have successfully routed the more crude and less artistic effects.

One beautiful picture frock was made in clinging golden draperies, while over this was worn a wonderful transparent long coat of purple and petunia chiffon, with a large bunch of fuchsia-coloured flowers at the waist which was outlined beneath the coat by a dull blue sash.

Dressmakers have gone to the flowers of the East for their inspirations, and many are the artistic designs that have originated from the spring anemone. These beautiful flowers, we are told, are the original lilies of the field mentioned in the Bible, and it is not hard to realize that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these—especially as such diaphanous things as georgette and chiffon were then unheard of. A simple dinner frock that depended more on the glories of its material than its cut was of the popular sacque shape, slipped over the head, but in wonderful painted chiffon in gold and crimson shades over an underdress of palest blue chiffon. The edges of the sacque were of gold lace, which fell softly over the arms to the elbow, and the girdle was of periwinkle blue. Eau-de-nil crêpe-de-chine was responsible for one delightful tea and dinner gown. Very simple, with nothing to relieve it except the huge bunch of English violets tucked into the sash, it depended chiefly on its clever drapery and long floating wing sleeves for its beauty. Worn by a tall woman, it was very charming indeed. With these frocks corsets are no more, and the latest substitute is very pretty, but can only be worn by the slim. It is simply a kind of little chemise of strong net or ninon, held in at the waist by a draw-string and over the shoulders by ribbon. When it reaches the hips a wide band of strong ribbon about eight or ten inches wide is attached, and on the lower edge of this band are the suspenders: pretty garters would probably be found necessary as well. The "corset" has no fastenings, and is simply stepped into. It will be a great joy to the summer girl who has not yet reached that terrifying age of elderly spread.

Even tweed has taken on a brilliant hue this spring, and the "awning-striped" coat (and skirt) of many colours is quite one of the newest attractions. A particularly fascinating tweed is in stripes shading from deep reds and purples to yellows and blue-greys. It sounds very noisy indeed, but it is not quite so alarming as it seems, as it has the dull blurred effect of an old Persian carpet, and the shades themselves might have been taken from a heathery landscape on an afternoon in mid-summer. This material was used to make a loosely belted coat and a fairly full country skirt. The belt was of leather, and matched the brogue shoes; while the cosy little hat was of dull purple or brown ribbon, and would defy any sort of weather. Coats are shorter than they were, but still reach to below the hips except in the case of the smart little coatees, which are to be worn as an adjunct to the more dressy frock of charmeuse or foulard, and are only for smart occasions. These are very loose, and are cut on draped lines, and are also made in a variety of colourings.

The correct colour for a motoring wrap is rust, not the warm shade that we have become accustomed to, but the exact tone that an old nail becomes with age and damp. Curiously enough, this is very becoming to most wearers, but is rather unsatisfactory as a wrap coat, as it is apt to clash with almost everything, and a hat of its own shade or dull

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

A FANCY DRESS FRIENDSHIP

"I WISH," said Helen, as she gave her hair a final pat, "that I could get hold of a really decent costume for to-morrow night. This Jazz affair is getting dreadfully tired. And every other girl in the room is wearing its twin sister."

A pretty rose-and-grey Pierrette who was adjusting her right shoe nodded reflectively.

"M'm," she said, "but it's no good worrying. It's a bore not being a plutocrat . . . I say, Helen, . . . just look there!"

The two girls gazed fascinated at a woman who had just slipped off her cloak. She wore a delicious eighteenth-century costume of mauve satin over a sprigged petticoat. A white powdered wig set off her softly glowing face and a patch was perched naughtily in one dimple.

"Isn't she exquisite?" whispered Helen. "I think those old-fashioned things are enchanting . . . and original these days! Come along Mabel . . . they're waiting for us."

. . . . . .

It was a very depressed Helen who changed her shoes in the dressing-room after the dance. Her costume was rumpled and torn, and a large stain was visible on the front.

"I *can't* go to the 'Excelsior' in this to-morrow night," she confided to Mabel. "I'll have to tell Guy I've got a headache or something."

"Poor old girl," sympathized her friend, "I've only this one fancy dress and I haven't a sou in the wide. Oh, I say, I was introduced to that lovely creature . . . she's a Mrs. Beauchamp. She's asked me to have tea at her flat to-morrow . . . here she is . . . I'll introduce you, too."

. . . . . .

The following afternoon Helen and Mabel were having tea with Mrs. Beauchamp. It was a charming room, and though the weather was warm, a small wood fire burned clearly in the grate.

Mrs. Beauchamp's appearance by daylight had given both girls something of a shock. Her frock was pretty, her complexion beautiful, but the lovely wig of the previous night had given place to her own hair, which was lank, dull and straight. Though she seemed young there was already more than one grey streak in her locks. She looked almost plain.

"I'm so glad you liked my frock," she smiled, in answer to a remark of Mabel's. . . . "But it always depresses me so. I do wish I lived in the eighteenth century, or that wigs were the fashion nowadays. I *can't* camouflage my horrid hair any way by daylight! Have another cake, Helen; they're *real* cream! Forgive my being frightfully rude, but could you tell me where you get your hair waved? Or is it natural?"

Helen laughed.

"Can't afford to patronize hairdressers," she answered, "and it isn't natural. No, I just use *silmerine*." She finished as if that explained everything. Mrs. Beauchamp knitted her brows.

"Silmerine?" she inquired. "I'm afraid I'm very ignorant. What is it? Where do you get it? What do you do with it?"

"One at a time," laughed Helen. "It is a rather nice-smelling colourless liquid. You can get it from any chemist's. You just damp your hair with it, put in slides where you want the wave . . . and, voilà, ze curls . . ."

"But that's too wonderful," exclaimed Mrs. Beauchamp. "Do you have to use it every day?"

"Oh no . . . the effects last for some days. And the queer thing is that the more you use silmerine the less often you require it. It seems to coax the hair into natural waves that stay in of their own accord."

"If my hair weren't so odiously thin and streaky," said Mrs. Beauchamp, "I would rush out this minute and buy a bottle before I have another sandwich. But my grey locks would look too ridiculous in waves. Shall I buy a bottle of peroxide or Condy's fluid and turn my few remaining hairs a bright gold or red?"

"Mrs. Beauchamp," put in Helen, "I'm going to reveal a horrid secret. A little while ago I found some grey hairs on my own head. Mabel's fair; she won't go grey so soon. So I got a packet of *tammalite* and dissolved it in bay rum, and put it on the faded parts with a clean little brush. It was wonderful the way that it gradually brought the colour back to my hair."

"How lovely!" exclaimed their hostess. "Yes, I really must try that. Tammalite, you said, didn't you? By the way a lot of people I know are using *boranium* as a hair tonic, but so far I haven't tried it. Do either of you know if it's any good?"

"Any good?" chorused the two girls. . . . "Why it's the only thing . . ."

"I mix it with bay rum——"

"You can use eau-de-cologne, I believe——"

"It's the most priceless stuff——"

"My hair's grown heaps thicker since I used it."

"Good gracious," interposed Mrs. Beauchamp . . . "I suppose I shall have to use it, too. I'll put it down with the tammalite. What do you shampoo with?" she asked. "You've both got such glorious hair."

This time Mabel answered . . . "Oh the usual . . . *Stallax*, you know."

"Stallax? I don't seem to know it. Is it some special preparation?"

"I don't think so," replied Mabel. "It is quite ordinary stuff, I believe. You can buy it in ½lb. tins from most chemists. But it makes the most lovely shampoo; it lathers gorgeously in any water, and your hair dries quickly after it and looks so soft and bright. My own hair always get so dry and brittle after a shampoo of any kind that I always massage my scalp with olive oil before washing it."

"That's awfully nice to know," said Mrs. Beauchamp. "By the way, Helen, didn't you say something about wanting a fancy dress for the 'Excelsior' dance to-night? You wouldn't care to borrow my rig-out, I suppose? It's just your size, and I know it would suit you."

"Mrs. Beauchamp," said Helen, "you're one of the best."

brown is a necessity, and makes it a little inconvenient at times. A very charming model in this colour hails from Paris. It has no longer the voluminous wrap outline to which we have become accustomed, and that can look either so very *chic* when worn by the right person or so very frumpy when worn by the wrong one, nor has it the new long-shaped waist effect. It is large and loose, but has a very pouched look at the back, and an artistic collar with floppy revers reaching the fastening at the waist, where it is held in by a long strap of the same material threaded in and out through large slots. The skirt is very full, and longer at the back than in front. The lining is of black satin, a quiet change after the brilliant foulard that is being pressed into service. Pilot cloth is the material used, and very successful it has proved. Elderly ladies so often complain that they do not know what to wear when they discard their fur coats, as the tailor-made coat and skirt is not for them. To these I can strongly recommend the big coat of pilot cloth for the wet, chilly days, or for the warmer spring weather—a three-quarter length coat of charmeuse lined with foulard, and finished with a large draped collar which stands well up at the back of the neck, and does away with the necessity for a feather boa.

The knitters of silk jumpers have now turned their attention to long-ribbed silk stockings to wear with brogue shoes in the summer. These are very practical, look charming when made with wide ribs and in a pretty shade of silk, and do not wear out easily, and they are extremely expensive to buy. A silk jumper, stockings, and knitted hat to match, carried out in pale mauve or yellow and worn with a grey or cream flannel skirt, will look delightful in the country, and lucky is the girl who has time to carry out the scheme!

UNSIGHTLY MARKS

Only the woman who has suffered from having a wart or other unsightly blemish on face or neck can understand what a great blessing is conferred on her fellow sufferers by anyone who can remove such disfigurements; but, of course, if a mark or scar is left behind, then the treatment is worse than useless. Mrs. Adair, of 92, New Bond Street, the well-known and very successful skin specialist, has over and over again proved her skill in removing superfluous hair, moles, warts, broken veins, and other skin blemishes, without leaving the smallest scar behind. Her skill in all branches of the toilet specialist's art is well known, and among her other extremely useful preparations she has a special cream for removing red veins from the face. Then her Ganesh Dare Treatment is for home use; it is not a depilatory, but removes hair by the roots, and leaves no mark or scar.

UNWANTED HAIR

Superfluous hair on face or neck is always unsightly in a woman, and the sleeveless evening gown of to-day demands that she shall appear perfectly smooth and white even under the arms. Fashion demands this, but if it is noticeable by redness which appears after some depilatories or darkness resulting from the use of the safety razor the pandering to fashion becomes vulgar. Therefore, the use of a depilatory that leaves the place perfectly smooth and white is a necessity, and there is none better to achieve this than "Pruh," which can be got from all good chemists and stores.

A Permanent Youthful Appearance.

Mrs. ADAIR'S

EASTERN MUSCLE OIL

TRADE MARK.

Removes all Lines, Fills out Hollows, Gives and Retains for you a Good, Clear, Healthy and Natural Complexion.

Nearer to the Natural Oil of the Skin than any yet invented.
Reaches the Muscles and Tissues, and is a Youth Restorer.

Original and Unsolicited Testimonials can be seen.

Prices 12/6, 21/6, and 35/6. Small Sample Size, 5/6. Largest Size sufficient for One Year.

Adair Ganesh Establishment, 92, NEW BOND STREET (Oxford St. End.) LONDON, W.
Telephone—GERRARD 3782. Also PARIS and NEW YORK

Dainty Afternoon Frocks

EXCLUSIVE designs, made in our own workrooms from rich quality materials. These Gowns are perfectly cut, and the finish is equal to that of the best type of garment usually made to order.

DAINTY FROCK in good quality Silk Georgette; straight bodice prettily embroidered in gold or silver, and plain skirt held in at foot. In a few artistic colours.

Price 9½ gns.

Debenham & Freebody
(DEBENHAMS LIMITED)
Wigmore Street.
(Cavendish Square) London W.

Famous for over a Century
for Taste, for Quality, for Value.

When answering these Advertisements please mention the Smart Set

COATS and SKIRTS

For Early Spring Wear

Well Cut and Tailored, and made in our own workrooms from fine quality suitings that we can recommend with the utmost confidence.

ATTRACTIVE COAT AND SKIRT in fine quality corded suiting. Daintily finished at neck (which when unfastened forms revers and pockets), with silk braid to tone, plain, well-cut skirt with pockets to match. In Navy, Black, and a few good colours.

Price 9 gns.

MARSHALL & SNELGROVE
VERE STREET AND OXFORD STREET
LONDON W1

CLASSIFIED ADVTS.

PERSONAL SERVICE

WRIGHT'S DETECTIVES. For Private Inquiries and Secret Watchings this Agency stands facile princeps for ability; vide Press; consultations free. T.N., London Wall 8,977. Edgar Wright, Manager, 89 MOORGATE ST. (near Bank of England). West End Branch 145, Oxford St., W. (T.N., Regent 4,830.)

SCIENCE

SIGNORINA BASTINIA gives the original answers of Planchette to questions asked by earnest inquirers. A test question, 1/6. Apply by letter only, NORTH HOUSE, BISPHAM, LANCASHIRE.

FIGUREOLOGY. Your capabilities, marriage, lucky stones, colours, years. Send birth date, month, year, and sex, with 2/6 to "EGYPTIAN," Box No. 2916.

DRESS

SMART GOWNS, Costumes, Furs, etc., at quarter original cost.—The Central Dress Agency, 14, Upper Baker Street (next to Bakerloo Tube).

LITERARY

> £5 £3 £1 <

PRIZES, FREE, awarded monthly for the best Short Story, Article, and Poem sent in. Awards published in *The Times*. Novels and Serials placed at highest prices with over 200 Publishers and Editors. Films also placed. Particulars for stamp.—CAMBRIDGE LITERARY AGENCY, 8, Henrietta Street, W.C. 2.

LITERARY ADVICE

SEND your rejected MSS. to the School of Authorship where they will receive expert and kindly criticism for a moderate fee. Numberless MSS. after previous rejection, having been through our hands, have been accepted. Secretary, 2a, School of Authorship, Granville House, Arundel Street, London, W.C. 2.

BUSINESS TRAINING

ACCOUNTANCY, SECRETARYSHIP, COSTING—the great professions of the future. Highly paid appointments are daily being obtained by qualified students of the Metropolitan College—the 'Varsity of Secretarial and Accountancy training. Specialized Postal Courses (exam. coaching and practical training) taken at home, in spare time, under the most highly qualified staff in the kingdom, comprising many Final Honoursmen, Chartered Accountants, and Barristers-at-Law. Fees are most moderate and may be paid by instalments. Send postcard, to-day, for list of recent appointments vacant, particulars of free scholarship scheme, and copy of "Students' Guide"; no charge or obligation.
Metropolitan College, Dept. 335, St. Albans.

Miss Irene Vanburgh

writes:
"I have great pleasure in recommending your GARNETIA. I have used it, and found it admirable in every way, and very softening to the skin."

GARNETIA SKIN FOOD. 1/3, 2/3, 4/3.
GARNETIA COLD CREAM. 1/9 a jar.
GARNETIA GREASE PAINT REMOVER. 1/9 and 3/3.

Send a postcard for dainty book describing newest Toilet and General Health Preparations—"BEAUTY AND HEALTH." It will interest you.

Manufactured solely by
The Garnett Pickles Preps. Co., Ltd.
35 Cromwell House, High Holborn, W.C. 1

SHERRY'S

MIDDLE STREET, BRIGHTON

The World's Finest Ballroom

DANCING

:: :: Daily at 3 and 8. :: ::

AMERICAN COCKTAIL AND OYSTER BAR.

You are now able to avoid Sea-sickness.

Established 25 Years **YANATAS** Established 25 Years

(*The remedy with the acrostic name*)

Prevents Sea-sickness

NEVER FAILS. SAFE AND HARMLESS.
OF ALL CHEMISTS. 3/- per bottle.
Wholesale Agents: DAKIN BROS., LTD., LONDON.